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LAW LIFE AND LETTERS

VOLUME TWO

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WORKS BY
THE RT. HON.
VISCOUNT BIRKENHEAD

LAW LIFE AND LETTERS
POINTS OF VIEW

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LAW LIFE AND LETTERS

BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE
EARL OF BIRKENHEAD

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IN TWO VOLUMES

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
X. 18TH BRUMAIRE	7
XI. PATRIOTISM AND THE MONARCHY	29
XII. SIR SIDNEY LEE'S <i>LIFE OF KING EDWARD</i>	51
XIII. LORD CURZON AND INDIA	69
XIV. THE TRUTH ABOUT "MARGOT ASQUITH"	90
XV. ELOQUENCE	98
XVI. REALITY AND OPPORTUNITY	161
XVII. MILESTONES OF MY LIFE	182
XVIII. EMPIRE DEVELOPMENT	250
XIX. THE BOLSHEVIST MIND	298
XX. A WORD FOR ENGLAND	314

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X

18TH BRUMAIRE

NO speculations in history are more fascinating than those which concern themselves with the effect upon great events of fortune or accident. This is particularly true when the incidents are of picturesque importance in the life of a great historical personage. It is, for instance, an interesting source of conjecture whether Disraeli would ever have become Prime Minister if denied the opportunity which Peel's *volte-face* on the Corn Laws afforded him. But the most conspicuous instance in history is that in which it seemed upon the 18th Brumaire as if a trivial incident had determined at once the career of Napoleon and the fortunes of Europe.

The *coup d'état* cannot be reconstructed without realising the position of Napoleon when it occurred, for it is impossible otherwise to do justice to the views of those who believe that, even if it had failed, his reputation and genius would nevertheless have succeeded in asserting a system of personal government. His career

had been one of success, swift, brilliant, and complete. Few lives have crowded more achievement into three and a half years than his between the early months of 1796 and October 1799. On March 2 in the earlier year he became Commander-in-Chief of the Army in Italy. The battles of Montenotte, Miliesimo, Dego, Cherasco, and Lodi followed in quick succession. In May he entered Milan. The capitulation of Mantua in February 1797 followed upon the battles of Castiglione and Arcola. And in the same short period Napoleon made it clear that he completely recognised both the strength and the detachment of his personal position. He negotiates the Treaties of Cherasco and Tolentino and arranges the conditions of the Peace of Campo Formio. His dependence upon the authorities in Paris continually dwindles ; and the conviction insensibly spreads that France has produced not only a brilliant soldier but a stubborn and dominating personality.

On his return to Paris in December of 1797 he found himself a popular hero ; and even then discerning observers formed the opinion that his career was one to which no limits could be assigned. Nor were many deceived by the apparent modesty with which he affected the

seclusion of private life. His aspiring nature was both obvious and notorious. At this time his thoughts were all of splendid warlike enterprise. A single sentence, however, in reply to a deputation showed that other thoughts attendant upon opportunity were even then present in his mind. "France," he said, "has need of a better political system."

But he concerned himself principally at this time with those plans for the destruction of England which gradually obscured his judgment, and, developing into monomania, finally shipwrecked his career. He became Commander of the Great Army against England. After rejecting the direct, but doubtful and hazardous, attempt of invasion, he decided to strike at England through Malta and Egypt. None can say how far the immense megalomania, which in later years clouded his faculties and caused his fall, and which even now inspired him with the crazy ambition of marching in conquest to Hindustan, was contributory to a decision which was, in fact, defensible by strategical considerations of a simpler character.

The Egyptian Expedition set sail on May 19, 1798. It evaded the observations of Nelson's fleet, which was cruising in the neighbourhood of

Crete, and captured Alexandria on July 2. On July 21 the Battle of the Pyramids was fought, and two days later Napoleon was in possession of Cairo. But shortly afterwards he sustained the crushing blow of the Battle of the Nile. Whether Napoleon ever suggested to Admiral Brueys that he should fall back on Corfu is disputed. The later orders, which are undoubted, came too late. It was the misfortune of Napoleon that in Nelson he met one hardly inferior to himself in genius, his equal in tenacity, his superior in singleness of view. Pitted against an ordinary opponent, Brueys would probably have been safe in the shoals of Aboukir Bay.

The result of this battle left Napoleon triumphant indeed upon the land, but deprived of all communication with France, and without the means of transporting his army home should circumstances render such a course necessary. Napoleon met the blow with extraordinary composure, allowing it to disturb neither his military nor administrative activities. Confronted with a declaration of war by Turkey and the information that two Turkish armies were converging upon Egypt, he marched in February for Syria. A month later he commenced the siege of Acre. It was resisted with resolution and success by

a great English soldier, Sir Sidney Smith, and late in May Napoleon was compelled to abandon the investment. He marched swiftly back to Egypt and overthrew the second Turkish Army in decisive rout.

His position at this moment was of extreme interest. He had become aware of the state of affairs at home, both domestic and foreign, and surmised with unerring clearness that the psychological moment for his reappearance had arrived. Nor was there any particular inducement to remain in Egypt. He was in effective, if somewhat precarious, occupation of the country, and was at the same time embarrassed by the knowledge that no prospect existed either of extending his success or of conveying his army home. Egypt offered nothing further to his personal ambition, and, on the other hand, a dazzling prospect of incalculable greatness awaited him in France.

He handed over his command to Kléber, and entered upon his perilous voyage in August of 1799. The spirit in which he went is revealed in his message to Marmont: "What can one expect from the incapable men who are at the head of affairs? Theirs is a rule of ignorance, folly, and corruption. I alone have borne the

burden, and by constant successes have strengthened the Government, which without me would neither have been able to get into power nor keep there. When I leave, everything falls to pieces. Let us not wait till the ruin is complete. The news of my return will reach France simultaneously with that of the destruction of the Turkish Army at Aboukir. My presence will raise the people's spirits, restore to the troops their lost confidence, and to good citizens their hope of happier days to come."

The two frigates *Muiron* and *Carrère* eluded the observations of Sir Sidney Smith, and against baffling winds and by a circuitous course made their way along the African shore towards Carthage. One of Nelson's cruisers guarded the dangerous channel between Tunis and Sicily. This peril was escaped at night, but Napoleon was thereafter detained for many days at Corsica. The risk was not over when at last they were able to sail, for early in October they were sighted by an English squadron, which immediately gave hot chase. Once again fortune befriended him; he escaped under the shelter of night, and on October 9 landed in Fréjus Bay.

The circumstances of this exciting voyage have necessarily been summarised, but enough

has been said to show its extremely hazardous nature. It was hardly less likely, on the whole, that he would be captured than that he would escape. At the moment his star was in the ascendant and his career on the upward plane. Had he been captured either by Sir Sidney Smith or between Tunis or Sicily, or, later still, off the Islands of Hyères, how different might the history of France and of Europe have been in the years which followed !

The moment of Napoleon's arrival was most happily timed. There was a general conviction in France that the men at the head of affairs were inadequate to the necessities of the crisis, and a general longing for the advent, upon a stage filled by commonplace actors, of some player of outstanding brilliancy and prestige. Innumerable difficulties confronted the Government of the day : the country was full of disorder, the finances embarrassed, and the Directory unpopular. Business in Paris was at a standstill, no recruits were forthcoming for the Army, a widespread reaction had followed upon the excesses of the Revolution, and a passionate desire was spreading through every class for order, stability, and discipline. Nor was the situation of foreign affairs more fortunate. The success of French

arms against Russia had by no means compensated for the loss of Italy. Here the national pride had sustained a severe blow, and the fruits of Napoleon's brilliant campaigns appeared to be irreparably lost.

Nor was compensation to be derived from any general confidence in the Constitution of the year III. Under this Constitution the Directory wielded the principal executive and administrative power. The Legislature, to which considerable powers of delay and control were conceded, consisted of the Council of the Ancients and the Council of the Five Hundred. Of the five Directors the most remarkable was Sieyès. He was in many ways a man of striking ability. A theorist, a constitutional lawyer, and a man of extraordinary industry, he had long busied himself in dissecting the shortcomings of a Constitution which he had always disliked, and in forming schemes for the construction of a new one. Sieyès would have been completely happy in any country if given a blank sheet of paper and the right to reconstruct its Constitution. He was, moreover, a man of great ambition, though without the nerve and personal daring which were necessary if he was to play that part in the turbulent politics of

contemporary France which he so ardently desired.

The meeting of two such men as Napoleon and Sieyès at such a moment was in itself a remarkable event. The latter had long been aware that association with a soldier and a man of affairs was necessary to his plans, but that he would have chosen Napoleon for a confederate if he could have found a man more pliable, but possessed of the necessary powers, is inconceivable. Either Napoleon or some other distinguished soldier was necessary to Sieyès, for the latter perceived clearly enough the conspicuous part which it would be possible for him to play, in association with a man of action, in the changes which he contemplated. And Sieyès was equally necessary to Napoleon. There can be no doubt that the latter was determined at this time to become in form as well as in fact the first man in France. He looked around him and saw everywhere pessimism and disillusionment. He saw amongst those in control failure, incompetence, and a degree of unpopularity which was rapidly approaching detestation, and he discerned with complete clearness that the country as a whole would welcome any change which guaranteed the permanence of the land reforms and secured to

all citizens the right to carry on their business without interruption and without the risk of recurrent political disturbance.

But Napoleon did not fail equally to observe how great were the difficulties which would have met a single-handed attempt on his part to execute a *coup d'état*. His prestige was indeed immense, and his popularity in Paris apparently unbounded, but no one could tell with precision how far Jacobinism was extinct among the mob, or what would be the consequences if the cry were raised, and believed, that he or anyone else was attempting to establish a Dictatorship. And it has been pointed out that great powers of resistance were still possessed by the Directory which, if reinforced by the two legislative bodies, could only have been borne down by an exercise of violence involving the greatest risk and uncertainty. Napoleon's own influence was not great either with the Directory or with the two Councils. His brother Lucien, indeed, was President of the Council of the Five Hundred, and was, as will be seen, destined to bear an intrepid and distinguished part in the events which followed, but this Council as a whole was tenaciously insistent upon the retention of its constitutional powers.

In these difficulties the help of Sieyès was

vital. He had been elected to the Directory in May 1799, after refusing to serve four years earlier on the ground that he disliked the Constitution and disbelieved in its permanence. He gained over to his side another Director, the supple Barras. The two deposed La Réveillière-Lépaux and Merlin, who were incorruptible ; and the Directory, as reconstructed in Brumaire, consisted of Sieyès, Barras, Gohier, Ducos, and Moulin. Of these Sieyès, Barras, and Ducos were favourable to Napoleon's designs ; the Council of Ancients was readily manageable ; and Lucien, whom at the moment no one suspected of treachery to the Constitution, had a considerable following in the Council of the Five Hundred. It is hardly necessary to repeat that Sieyès and Napoleon wanted quite different things. Sieyès wanted a new idealogue Constitution, which he would have the pleasure of drafting, and under which his academic powers would have full scope for what he conceived to be their legitimate influence. Napoleon wanted to be the first man in France, and the only man in France, and was contemptuously and justly certain that he could fling Sieyès aside as soon as he ceased to be useful.

Such was the position at the moment when it

was determined by these strangely assorted accomplices to put everything to the hazard.

On November 6, at a banquet given by the Chamber to Moreau and Bonaparte, the arrangements were completed. The attempt was to be made on the 18th and 19th Brumaire. Napoleon had satisfied himself that he could in the main count upon the Army. He was, as always, idolised by the private soldiers, and had conciliated by skilful manipulation the more important Generals. The general public was prepared for unusual measures by adroitly disseminated reports that the Jacobins were contemplating insurgent movements, and that a recrudescence of violence was to be apprehended. On the 18th Brumaire a memorable session of the Council of Ancients began. It was then decided, under a preconcerted plan and within the powers of the Constitution, that the sitting should be transferred to Saint-Cloud. On the motion of Regnier it was resolved that both Councils should meet at the Palace on the 19th Brumaire, and that this decree should be carried out by General Bonaparte, who for that purpose was given the command of the National Guards, the Guard of the Legislative Body, and the garrison of Paris. A further resolution provided that General Bonaparte

should appear before the Council of Ancients and take the oath.

While these momentous resolutions were in process of adoption Napoleon was awaiting news in his house, in the midst of the most trusted of his military supporters. Who can tell what strange ambitions, what uneasy apprehensions, filled that inscrutable head at this supreme moment of his destiny? That he was consumed by the most poignant anxiety is certain; that his nerve was very considerably affected was proved by the events which followed in quick succession. The two dissentient Directors, Moulin and Gohier, at once perceived the significance of Regnier's motion. Gohier was placed under arrest, Moulin made good his escape. In the meantime Napoleon, informed a little prematurely of the compliance of the Ancients, rode to the Tuileries. Fournier reminds us that in his route he passed the Place de la Concorde, where the Statue of Liberty was under repair. It will be remembered that Napoleon was to take the oath to the Constitution. He evaded this obligation, plunging instead into vague rhetoric which was much applauded by the soldiers in the gallery, but produced very little impression upon the Ancients; and, indeed, even before the Council, largely

favourable to himself, which he first addressed, he appeared to little advantage.

It seemed as if his personality, so overpowering amid familiar surroundings, had failed him under circumstances of which he had so little experience. He left the Council unconvinced, and engaged in doubtful whisperings and uneasy consultation.

A greater ordeal awaited him, and one to which he was to prove even more unequal. It became necessary to face the Council of the Five Hundred. The influence of Lucien Bonaparte had induced this Council to acquiesce without undue suspicion in the transference of the session to Saint-Cloud ; but its members were wholly unprepared to acquiesce in any violent inroad upon the Constitution. Napoleon entered the hall, and as he entered the uniforms of his military companions became clearly visible to those within. Immediately there rang out the cry, which in the last few years had sounded the death-knell of so many daring adventurers, " Outlaw him ! Down with the Dictator ! " These cries were taken up all over the Chamber, and seemed for a moment to spell the message of doom. Napoleon flinched, and for a moment everything was lost. He did not even altogether

escape physical violence, but was roughly jostled by indignant members. The soldiers formed around him, and escorted him from the hall pale, dismayed, incoherently babbling, no longer his own man. This was the supreme crisis of his life, and he was saved not by himself (for he had failed himself), but by Lucien.

Both within the Chamber and even without among the soldiers the position was hazardous, uncertain, and critical. Within arose an immediate demand that a vote of outlawry should be passed by the Council. It is impossible to say with dogmatic certainty what would have been the consequences of such a vote, but that it would have involved Napoleon in the gravest and the most immediate peril is apparent. Lucien Bonaparte, with swift and brilliant instinct, realised that the only hope of saving the situation was to suspend the sitting. This he did, flinging aside his official robes, and leaving the Chamber under the protection of soldiers who entered in order to extricate him.

Observe how charged with danger the situation now was. The Ancients were unconvinced and sullenly antagonistic to Napoleon's confused and almost unintelligible arguments. The Five Hundred, in a state of violent resentment, and

undeterred by the secession of the President, were still discussing the propriety of a vote of outlawry.

The last hope now lay with the soldiers. In which scale would they throw their weight? Even this question could not be answered with certainty. They were, it is true, devoted to Napoleon; they believed in his star, and recognised with admiration his brilliant military gifts. But prejudice against the assumption of despotic power was in their very marrow, and there was proceeding before their eyes, evident and unmistakable, the violent destruction of the whole fabric of the Constitution. The issue hung in the balance. The Revolution and all it stood for were at the hazard. It became evident that it could only be determined favourably to the conspirators by one of those skilful, daring, and dramatic appeals of which very great men are capable in times of very great crisis.

Crisis stared Napoleon in the face, but it was not Napoleon who rose to the height of resource which that crisis demanded. The essential falsity of the antithesis so frequently attempted between men of words and men of deeds—for there are many occasions in which words are deeds—received a signal illustration. Napoleon, the man

of deeds, was still not master of himself: Lucien, the man of words, was equal to the needs of a moment both poignant and decisive.

Mounting a horse, he addressed the excited soldiers. "Frenchmen," he said, "the President of the Council of the Five Hundred assures you that the vast majority of that assembly is at present terrorised by a number of deputies armed with daggers who besiege the tribunal, threatening their colleagues, and proposing the most violent resolutions. I tell you, these insolent brigands, doubtless in the pay of the English Government, are rebelling against the Council of the Ancients, and are demanding outlawry of the General deputed to carry out the Council's decree. I assure you this handful of violent men, by their assaults upon the liberty of this assembly, have put themselves outside the law. To the soldiers I entrust the duty of liberating the majority of the nation's representatives, so that, protected from daggers by your bayonets, we may be able to deliberate in peace on the interests of the Republic. You will regard those only who have come here among you with their President, as Deputies of France. As for those who have stayed behind in the Orangerie to vote upon the act of outlawry, thrust them out. These

robbers are no longer representatives of the people—but of the dagger.”¹

Even this adroit and impassioned speech did not at once succeed in inducing the soldiers to march upon the assembly. They contented themselves with giving cheers for Bonaparte, but hesitated before resorting to violence against the Deputies. Here, again, it was Lucien who, with a sure melodramatic instinct, captured the waverers. He drew his dagger, pointed it at Napoleon’s heart, with an oath that he would kill his brother if he ever failed in fidelity to the liberty of France. The point was carried. The troops under Murat burst into the hall. The Deputies met their entry with defiant cheers for the Republic. But the discord melted into silence before the menacing drums of the soldiery, and the Councillors were driven in headlong flight through the doors and the windows. Such were the methods adopted in dealing with the body which was most hostile to the plans of the conspirators. It remained to apply the necessary degree of persuasion to the Ancients. Here, again, the resourceful Lucien played that indispensable part. He prevailed upon the Council to resolve that the “Consular fasces,”

¹ Fournier,

the illustrious symbol in old days of republican liberty, should be adopted to confound slanderers and reassure the nation, "the unanimous consent of which will consecrate your labours." It was therefore decided that a provisional Government should be created of three Consuls, and that both Chambers should at once be adjourned. On the same night Lucien harangued the complaisant Rump of the Five Hundred into acceptance of similar resolutions.

It is not necessary to trace subsequent events in any detail. The *coup d'état* was complete, and after a brief interval it became clear that nothing stood between Napoleon and autocratic power. The true interest of the whole attempt is to be found in the narrow margin by which it succeeded. Sieyès had been under no apprehension as to the reality of his danger. A coach with six swift horses ready harnessed outside his house bore witness to his appreciation of the risk. The more one considers the story of the attempt, the more extraordinary does its complete success become.

It is evident from the admissions of the conspirators themselves that they were in the greatest doubt as to the disposition of the mob in Paris. The whole number of soldiers readily available

was inconsiderable, and no one could confidently expect that such soldiers as these were could be induced to carry out by force of arms a revolution for which neither they nor their leaders, other than Napoleon, were prepared. Napoleon's astuteness, his lack of scruple, his daring, and his judgment of human nature were most strikingly illustrated in the preparatory stages of the attempt, but all his most characteristic qualities failed him at the supreme moment. It is probable that he overrated alike the influence of Sieyès over the Ancients, of Lucien over the Five Hundred, and of himself over the soldiers. There is, at any rate, evident ground for the conclusion that he was disconcerted by his reception among the Ancients, dismayed by the open hostility of the Five Hundred, and unprepared with that appeal to the soldiers which he of all men should have known how to make in direct and telling language. One could have understood that Lucien, the practised and accomplished Parliamentarian, should have been more at home in the Council, but it is amazing that the decisive appeal to the soldiers—an appeal of which we cannot afford to deride the melodrama, for it conquered a supreme situation—should have proceeded from him and not from the greater

brother who knew better than any soldier ever knew how to speak to his soldiers language that penetrated at once to their very hearts.

What would have happened if the event which so narrowly succeeded had, in fact, failed? It is very doubtful whether Napoleon could have escaped with his life. He might, indeed, have galloped away for a last appeal to the mob of Paris, or to repeat to the rest of the Army Lucien's tale of an attack upon his life. It is utterly impossible to give a confident opinion whether he would have succeeded or not; but there can be little doubt that had he fallen into the hands of the hostile majority of the Council of the Five Hundred, he would have been in great danger of paying the penalty of his attempt with his life. He might easily have fallen as Cæsar fell. Indeed, his enterprise was plainly of a character which, in the eyes of Republicans, admitted neither of defence nor extenuation.

Every action taken was explicable only as part of a carefully considered *coup d'état* the object of which was to subvert the existing Constitution of France. If Napoleon, convicted of such an attempt, had been spared, those who spared him would have deserved all the retribution which his survival would assuredly have

brought them. In its more personal aspect the incident, as I have attempted to show, did little justice to the desperate courage which Napoleon so often exhibited, both earlier and later. On at least one other well-known occasion in his career he lost his nerve when he needed it most. The presence of mind, the resource, the boldness, and the ready falsehoods of Lucien were really the qualities which carried the day, and it may be doubted, whether the whole of history can afford a more striking instance of energy and inspiration shown by one brother in the crisis of another's destiny.

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XI

PATRIOTISM AND THE MONARCHY

THAT every sentient being must live for something outside the individual self is a wholesome proposition not likely to be disputed, even by the most paradoxical reasoner who may capture the fancy of the passing hour. At the same time, there are many legitimate divergencies of opinion concerning the duty which man or woman should accord to the family, the hamlet, the country, or the race—perhaps to mankind at large. There are differences here, indeed, which I should like to reconcile. For it would rejoice me, in contemplating those difficult tasks of statesmanship which yet lie ahead, to give a new direction, possibly a new meaning, to the ideal of patriotism. This ideal has been a fact of history. And more than that. It has been an important factor in international development: one which we have to consider with care in facing the immediate future.

Not long ago, in the pages of a widely circulated magazine, I referred to patriotic feelings as

though they should possess, in essence, something of the passionate. If this be conceded, there follows a challenge to the anti-patriotic which cannot fail of force. In a word, if anybody denies patriotism to be a virtue, a necessity, and a power: all I can say is—there will soon be “wigs on the green.”

Patriotism is not a quality or a qualification, a theory or a thing, easily to be understood or to be taken absolutely for granted. A charming and rhythmical aphorism of Sir Walter Scott's lingers universally on the ear. All will agree that those must be devoid of soul who have no love for their native land. Many poets might be quoted to the same effect. Leaders have died with this very thought on their lips. This does not mean that we can forget current warnings. Nor yet the past. For ourselves, owning allegiance to a land great in tradition, in history, in natural and varied beauty, pride touches passion, as soon as the unparalleled expansion of our political strength and influence is taken into account. For us, patriotism has overflowed the banks of rivers.

Such is our country. The local has already swelled into the imperial. There has been something more than natural growth. The man who

is conscious of it might easily be persuaded that he had succeeded to that poetic inheritance which in olden times made one nomad people to be, of all in the known world, the divinely chosen race.

We ourselves are not nomads. We are varied and commingled, and very widely we wander ; but, as a people, we have settled down. The dominions over which our sympathy, with authority, is farthest flung, look back to their original home, satisfied that it is the most stable thing in a changing universe ; and much more than satisfied in affection and allegiance.

But, in all this absorption, the knowledge persists that stability is not the only thing that makes for patriotism. Patriotism of the highest kind is for those, above all others, who possess language, and with this, it may be, the consciousness of race. Local habitation is not necessary. Language alone gives very much more than a name. What more poignant passage is recorded in the sacred literature which we ourselves have adopted than the song of those exiles by the waters of Babylon who wept when they remembered Zion ? But we, fortunate in cherishing a patriotism which does not need to weep, would be less than grateful if we showed ourselves oblivious of the springs which still give us internal and

external strength. And still we continue to rise, as a people, higher than these sources. We have to prove ourselves mightier yet.

Were we to dwell too fervently on the past, on its glories or its sorrows, we should run the risk of losing all our common sense in sensibility, in sententiousness. If patriotism of any kind is worth having, it will be well to have more of it. But one can have too much of a good thing. I find it necessary, indeed, to draw a definite line at this point. It is not only that there are different kinds of patriotism. There are different degrees. Patriotism may be true or false. After all, many a thief masquerades as a specially honest man. Once more, we have to draw a line. We have to draw many lines.

There is the line, for example, which separates the near from the distant. But when we come to examine the boundaries, we realise that there runs through all time an express unity of character; human nature does not change. Give anything a fair start and you can imagine the rest: every river must reach the sea, but the spring and the stream and the ocean are of varying magnitudes. So it is with all the tributaries which together constitute patriotism. There is an instructive parallel, perhaps, in literature, once

we regard literature as Art and Science combined ; and perceive the significance of the combination.

An academic contemporary of my own, one who has developed into a real pundit, once read a paper before a critical but inchoate assembly. He discoursed not unwisely on the beginnings of literature. I remember how he remarked, in the attitude of one who had made a discovery, that the lamp over the portals of his own obscure lodging bore a number. This, said he, was for him "the beginning of literature." How many things that solitary number postulated and suggested ! There was the Man who made the Lamp—and the Man who had Spun the Glass—and the Art of Writing—and the Power of Calculation—and the idea of an Entrance used by beings who would also find an Exit—all this was involved. From which a clever mind could educe almost anything, from birth to death, from the cradle to the grave. Imagination being once invoked, the record—that is Literature—was concurrently secured. The *cacoethes scribendi* came into action, I think, long before lamps, but still this parable I will now relate to my subject of patriotism, tracing that beyond its origins likewise : for the evolution of patriotism is not unlike the evolution of literature itself.

The cavemen, people who are so often used in parables, must positively have instructed themselves in the rudiments of patriotism as soon as they realised that a fissure, a rock, or a stream might make, not natural barriers only, but actually coincide with differences of opinion; and divisions of opinion did spring to life as soon as ever there was a meeting with other barbarians. Happily for the human race, the resulting confusion came to be adjusted, often enough, as soon as the first shock of the meeting was over. But we still retain the primitive feeling that a preliminary clash is by no means the worst preparation for the ultimate shaking of hands. That is the lighter way of putting it. For hence comes war and all the terrific panoply of armament. Any pleas based on the need of patriotism here—a thing that must not be neglected, because wars righteous and unrighteous are equally fought under that ægis—calls for the use of heavier guns. It is all very well to think and talk of that final handshaking. But the intervals are filled with tremors of earth and sky. This means, very likely, that we have not as yet got very far on the road which the cavemen trod. But all experience was in their experiments, just as all literature was in the number on the lamp.

I make a gift of the admission to those who will read into it a charge against patriotism itself. For truly, looking candidly at internecine feuds, those who blame an exaggerated patriotism may have some critical sense within them. There are occasions when the critic may justly vote for an enlargement of that famous dictum of Dr. Johnson: "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel."

These considerations are in truth on the larger side already. But patriotism has an inner side, an intimate side, a natural and a very homely appeal. It is because of this, high politics apart, that everybody can understand it; because of this, that of late its claim, its necessity, and its power have increased among us.

I revert, for a moment, to more primitive types and to their gradual evolution. In the very simplest societies the desire to accentuate worthy rivalries between tribe and tribe produced, by degrees, emergence of individuality and also of the civic sense. The more civilised a race became, the more a feeling for home was developed. But civilisation cannot live on itself, any more than literature can.

Millions of the best people have been content to live for home and not to live outside it, but

gregariousness has not been starved in consequence. School, college, guild—the development is continuous. Either might provide enough patriotism for any individual soul to account for a cosmos. Perhaps civilisation would be more real, certainly mankind would be a good deal happier, if we could stop at this ; but we cannot. Patriotism cannot be stagnant. It must respond to the laws of growth. The groups of which I have spoken will scatter seeds. Patriotism has been defined as “ a consciousness of nationality together with the will to realise such nationality further.” That is pretty good for a scientific definition. The theme is abstract, and I did not put this attempt forward for the sake of knocking it down ; the positive idea which is implied is suggestive enough.

But to be more precise, patriotism is in truth a sense of duty to one's own people and one's own time which will not limit itself to the life in being but will sacrifice all that life can give to this duty. In the definition I have cited, I find there is more excluded than there is admitted. I find in it small sign of duty ; none of sacrifice. Scientific definitions are rather like flowers frozen in a block of ice. You break the ice and set the flowers free ; and then they die. I want some-

thing less liable to perish in the free air of thought and conviction. Most of us accepted in youth the old moral: *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*. The words, of course, familiar as they are, may be carped at. Is it always sweet, is it noble, always, to die for one's country? Is it the most fitting of all deaths? Not so; we cannot accept the unvarying validity of such a decree. Nevertheless there have been Roman deaths, in the fuller sense, in all the years since Rome was a power, which make such words infallibly just. And the consensus of reasonable opinion takes this kind of sacrifice and all it involves as inseparable from the idea of patriotism. But there is a point at which some of our young men of to-day will have none of this. In their caustic discommendation something 'lies, which the old notion of patriotism must nerve itself to meet.

I think it all comes back to the thought of sacrifice enlarged; all the more because this is a matter concerned not nearly so much with death as it is with life. Our country needs us for the doing of things which carry with them no particular honour or joy. There are many common duties inseparable from the community's requirements. Some of them are highly irksome. But

there may be pleasure too. We may take the smooth with the rough.

One juror may smile—another may make a wry face—when, for his endurance of tedium for a week, due to the enemies of society, one of his Majesty's Judges offers a personally conducted tour over one of his Majesty's prisons by way of recompense for his trouble. It is the smiler who gets the best of it. The grimacer can be bowed out of court without ceremony. I take this trivial instance of sacrifice for duty as a form of patriotism liable to be indulged in by anybody, not oblivious of the fact that many thousand of acts performed daily in our land possess the same humorous virtue. But I think our collective virtue, of a more serious kind, greatly transcends this. Our sacrifices within living memory, and for really great causes, have been on the rising scale. Our own proverbs are above the proverbial now. They strike a pæan, such as might have been struck in Athens long ago. And there has been an increase in all the spheres of interest involved. To the rank and file, the chance of performing a patriotic service may come but once in a lifetime. To others the service itself may be almost naturally lifelong. There is a vast amount of unrecognised service astir. Committees that

care for the blind at home are but shadows of those greater councils which open the eyes of the world to our magnified mission wherever the sun of our influence is shining.

Here is the enlarged patriotism which must strike every imagination and warm every heart. That acute observer, Dean Inge, on his return from America, charged us to remember that in this vast continent of States patriotism is taught in every school. Americans enter on life believing in a patriotic system ; and this is the America which we lost through an excessive devotion to the idea of nationality. It may be doubted, however, whether any formal organisation of our teaching would alter the invincibility of Britain, as it grows in the average mind through our temperament, our casual upbringing, or other form of natural growth. It would seem that with every setback to our pride we brace ourselves afresh.

But it is when we look over a widened field and see things undone, or only partially progressing, that we are most deeply concerned. Even here there are some favourable omens. The pageantry of existence is a fine medium of expansions in itself. The Earl of Meath saw this, when he let his ideas of symbolism in action break upon

the country, and spread his thoughts about the faith of patriotic unity far and wide. And the Dean inclines to Lord Meath. The Dean's brief, which I am happy to hold with him, was engrossed with an equally important plea. He was speaking up for schemes of settlement overseas. The congestion of our own country, the pressing need for the movement of men and families, cannot fail to attract every spirit that looks forward to better times. Endurance and sacrifice are not to be left unconsidered when these ideas are ventilated. And it was right to associate herewith an expression of faith in the British tribal creed which, ethically speaking, has come to embrace every nation on earth.

It is not least by those charters of freedom which now are held unassailable—or else, failing this, to be defended by us to the death—that the aid of the individual and of the community are found to be at one. Those charters are in themselves the proof of our extended patriotism. I do not forget, as I write these words, some drawbacks, some weaknesses. In the course of a long and varied experience of the world I have occasionally met specimens of that unwelcome intruder who will praise “every century but this, every country but his own.” I have been confronted,

in the Courts and elsewhere, with individuals and coteries not unversed in chicanery. But I think we are discovering daily fresh antidotes, for the confusion of these poisoners of the wells of patriotism. And again I look far afield.

The patriotism of which I am thinking most has an outward show, and it has an inner working. It chances that appositely enough there has recently appeared a very remarkable book. It exemplifies a complete concentration of what I have been saying here. It professes an unbounded belief in those beneficent activities which have been characteristic of our race ; its pages teem with constructive ability, graceful writing, and all the manifestations of a fervent spirit ready to work and suffer. I am speaking of the late Lord Curzon's *British Government in India*.

That a life is a bigger thing than a book, and that a man is greater than his work, might well prove a congenial theme on which to build some interesting hypotheses and for the enforcing of certain conclusions. But my readers will be ready to absorb the moral without effort. Once more, the triumphs best worth preserving in the recollection of a race are individual triumphs. In all the vigorous life of the Marquess Curzon was

a fine outward show together with a splendid inner working. And I commend that example to all. I make here, of course, no declaration of Indian policy. Nor will anyone think of such a thing as a political secret in connection with a subject which declares itself practically identical in all its aspects with the light of day. But I deem myself happy to have this effulgent example before me.

Of the fascinating records which concern so many famous personalities, future generations will judge; but I imagine that these will give a new lease of life to many memories. Indeed, everything we have here considered is represented in the services of men who for the most part were willing exiles. Duty and sacrifice are written on every page. We have analysed those two words with sufficiency. We see how, in one way and another, patriotism is concentrated within them; and strange to relate, as a corrective to national diffuseness, concentration on patriotism is the greatest need of our people to-day.

But here, as Lord Curzon's contribution to his own fame, even as the book must prove a contribution to the fame of others, so no feature is more important than an unveiling of person-

ality. The writer shows the shrouded life in the highest place. He pictures, again and again, the difficulty, the isolation of the patriotic soul. He reveals the secrets of many, not hesitating to uncover his own. At the root of all this is patriotism: a man's love of his country. Am I going beyond my commission if I urge that the lesson here given in the highest place is the lesson most urgently needed for our rank and file in the interests of individuality as well as of the highest patriotism? The mantle of the Secretary of State for India is assuredly broad enough to cover this appeal. And India, still requiring service, requires our men.

There are fears, justifiable fears, for those who are oppressed by circumstances, when venturesomeness in foreign fields is not eagerly accepted. And yet I do not think that we are deficient in breed, in many ways, as far as risks are concerned. Wide is the possible choice, even in these days, for the young. I would urge every reader of these lines to take patriotism as some part of his necessary equipment for the rest of his life, whether the span be long or short in prospect. For those in youth, there is fascination in change. For those who have seen and done, there is influence to be wielded. To those who think of an imperial

liberty as their guide, the way is clear. True patriotism can still be employed at home, but still it beckons from a far distance for the sake of the future generations.

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The recent ill-mannered Clydesdale outbreak against the Prince of Wales must neither be taken too seriously nor must it be imputed to the Labour Party as a whole. In fact, the two most responsible leaders of that Party, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Mr. Clynes, have shown great courage in dissociating themselves from the attitude of their extreme left wing. It is notorious that Mr. J. H. Thomas takes the same view.

The incident would have very little importance if it did not illustrate in a very convincing manner how completely *démodé* the extreme section of the Labour Party is becoming.

Forty years ago there was an anti-monarchical section in this country which was potentially formidable. It numbered among its leaders men of such conspicuous power as Mr. Joseph Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke. Henry Labouchere was in the same camp. There were moments in the life of Queen Victoria in which she became extremely unpopular, and by her temporary unpopularity gave some encouragement to those

in this country who were anti-monarchical. The golden evening of the life of this great lady more than atoned for the errors of omission, such as they were, which she committed in the lifelong stress of a bitter and poignant bereavement.

Then came King Edward. He was extraordinarily human, extraordinarily English, full of bonhomie, and animated by an intuitive *flair* which made him completely at home—and, indeed, a dominating personality—in the company of very various societies. King Edward left the Monarchy at least as strong as he found it, which is a very high tribute if one reflects for a moment upon the venerable but steady lustre of Queen Victoria's declining years.

Of the present King it would be impertinent to say more than this—that by universal admission no one has ever sat upon the Throne in this country who has more conscientiously, steadfastly, and laboriously contrived to become the hereditary President of the destinies of a democratic country. His influence is and always will be great in public affairs.

This does not mean that the influence of every monarch in this country will always be great. It means that the influence of every monarch will always be great who not only perfectly under-

stands his own constitutional position, but conscientiously adjusts that position to that of the Prime Minister of the day and to the party which sustains that Prime Minister in office. It is sufficient to say upon this matter that no one has even criticised the King since his accession to the Throne. He has been always correct; he has been always helpful.

The attack upon the Prince of Wales was particularly stupid, because it fastened upon the beggarly sum which was to be voted to meet the expenses of an additional tour to which the Prince had assented (though it added much to his formal exertions) upon very warm invitations from South American Republics.

Every sensible man knows that in our present industrial stress we have great hope of commercial development by the increase of trade with the South American Republics. Everyone but a Socialist would realise that if we would increase the goodwill which may lead to better business it would be wise to send as our Ambassador to these communities the man whom they will most gladly and most respectfully welcome.

Oddly enough, they asked for the Prince of Wales, and not for a Clydesdale member of Parliament. We should have gladly paid the

expenses of either, but few of us on the whole have any doubt as to which will afford the greater value for the expenditure.

It would be almost as impertinent to speak in praise of the Prince of Wales as of the King. But this, perhaps, may be plainly said, that the Prince combines many of the good qualities of King Edward with many of the good qualities of King George. He is brave, human, and absolutely determined not to conceal from his fellow-countrymen that he looks upon life as a great complex adventure in which solemn duties must be fully discharged, but with which, nevertheless, he is entitled to combine a measure of gaiety and relaxation.

In my humble judgment, the British people (taken as a whole) will completely sympathise with the Prince's wish that his countrymen shall understand him as he is, and England likes that kind of man. He will be not weaker but stronger in virtue of his determination to make plain, and pursue without deflection, his own philosophy of life. For it is defensible, well thought out, and consonant with the discharge of high public duty.

The real truth is that the British people, including, to their great credit, all the leaders of the Labour Party who count in the estimation of the

country, are more and more clearly resolved that the Monarchy is indispensable. It is economical; it is completely loyal to the democratic principle; it has become more easily and more impressively the mouthpiece of that principle than any substitute which could be suggested.

Have those who attack the Monarchy, openly or covertly, ever considered what position we should be in if it were suddenly abolished? Modern Republics furnish no satisfactory solution. Even presidencies are somewhat expensive to maintain, are sometimes filled by unpopular or disingenuous personalities, and are liable to become the seats of party chicanery and political manipulation.

The great value of an enlightened and wisely guided Monarchy, such as the British Empire possesses, is that it stands high above faction, and is of itself (as was proved during the life of the Labour Government) the surest guarantee of stability at times when the nation has failed to express itself decisively.

Without the House of Windsor something irreplaceable would be torn from the fabric of our imperial, civic, and social existence. We might make Mr. Baldwin our first President, or Mr. Lloyd George, or even Mr. Ramsay Mac-

Donald, but the moment we did so we should introduce controversy into the headship of the State, and should lose about the only institution we now possess which stands aloof from the jealousies and antagonisms that beat about almost every other institution, except the Judiciary.

The Monarchy is an ancient symbol admirably adapted to modern practices. It provides the nation, at home and overseas, with a fund of interest, romance, and dignity which no alternative could possibly supply.

And a far more formidable consideration remains. By the Monarchy, and by the Monarchy alone, the Empire can be held together. What President will exhibit in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand the inextinguishable prestige which belongs to him who sits in the seat of the Norman William, and still brings a mind attuned alike to the historic traditions of his exalted rank, and to the democratic problems of a post-war world? The British Monarchy will endure until there arises a monarch unworthy to support its traditions. It might even survive (so great is its inherent hold upon the nation) such a one. But we are happily so situate that we need not even contemplate such a remote contingency.

We may, therefore, wave away the recent

feeble demonstration in the House of Commons as a foolish antic, repelled by the fair and reasonable sense of the democracies which constitute this Empire and without whose support this Empire could not survive.

XII

SIR SIDNEY LEE'S *LIFE OF KING* *EDWARD*

THIS conscientious biography is as scholarly and as thorough as those who are familiar with the artistic craftsmanship of Sir Sidney Lee would expect. His work is throughout solid, and it is readable, with qualifications, just as suet pudding is eatable, with qualifications. One feels, in other words, in the intervals of reading it, the need of a change of diet. I read it all through at one and the same time on a long railway journey and its return ; and I am bound to confess that I found the process difficult and even a little disciplinary, though the compensations for such a task are many and ingeniously distributed through the volume.

It is a very discreet book. And, indeed, Sir Sidney Lee would have been most gravely to blame if in the lifetime of persons of the highest consequence he had published anything but a discreet book. Yet the King Edward whom the people loved, and who founded the Monarchy

upon a tide of higher national affection and admiration even than Queen Victoria, was neither a cold nor an ascetic man. Few particularly likeable people are. The English nation has never, on the whole, been extremely puritanical. It rallied round the Duke of Wellington; it supported Lord Melbourne; it was extremely appreciative of the eccentricities of Lord Palmerston. King Edward's greatest charm—and, it may be added, his greatest gift—was his spontaneity, his patience in irksome duties, his tact, and his bonhomie. He understood the English people, and the English people understood him. They treated him, and rightly treated him—for in cool perspective he justified the view—as a great King.

He was the loyalest of friends. "I may have, and have," he wrote, "many faults; but I have held one great principle in life from which I will never waver, and that is loyalty to one's friends, and defending them when they get into trouble."

He was not in the least intellectual. In contrast with his mother's there is hardly a letter of his which exhibits any close or sustained grasp upon any difficult political question. He thought indeed with a good instinct but rather in fragments. There is not on record any conversation

with him which I can recall exhibiting him as one who had mastered the complex details of any difficult public problem. And yet he had a quality as elusory as undefinable, which you might with equal accuracy describe either as intuition or the power of a general assimilation which immensely influenced the political fortunes of this country. The final Life of King Edward still remains to be written. It is no fault of Sir Sidney Lee that he has failed to write it. But it cannot be faithfully rendered in this generation.

The conscientious pages of Sir Sidney Lee make this at least plain : that no more sweet and amiable personality has, in the long and varied history of the British Crown, been called to the highest place. His youth must have been quite terrible. The Prince Consort was a very remarkable personality. He was even, in a way, a great man. But perhaps it may be permitted to one of a later generation to adventure the criticism that he must have been a very trying father. He was an incredibly conscientious pedant, knowing nothing of English youth and its traditional freedom. From the moment that King Edward was born to the moment that the Prince Consort died, the youth was submitted to an educational and moral régime which few could

have survived without mental and physical collapse. Baron Stockmar did indeed disappear at the most relevant periods. But his doctrines and his discipline survived his disappearance. It is terrible to most of us who have to work out our own lives, to think of the constant wearing and uncongenial discipline to which the Prince of Wales was subjected. If he was not born in an incubator, he was treated as if he ought to have been. He was to be screened from the world ; he was to have eight hours' work a day at least browsing disagreeably upon intellectual problems, which did not in the least interest him, and which perhaps in his education as a Prince need not particularly have interested him. He was allowed no fun. He was to be surrounded and as it were suffused by the educational influence of a certain number of middle-aged gentlemen, whose moral influence must always have been sound, but whose company cannot always have satisfied a young and very human boy.

To-day the attitude of the Prince Consort seems simply incredible. To the Dean of Christ Church he wrote in 1858 : " The more I think of it, the more I see the difficulties of the Prince being thrown with other young men, and having to make his selection of acquaintances." And

again in 1859, in a passage for which Oxford, ancient and modern, will thank him: "The only use of Oxford is that it is a place for study, a refuge from the world and its claims."

I must not be supposed to be giving the final voice upon the very difficult question of the degree of freedom which ought to be accorded to young people of the female sex; but I nevertheless make it perfectly plain that I do not believe that there is one young *débutante* of the present year who would allow her mother to treat her as King Edward was treated by the Prince Consort and by Queen Victoria. His sweetness of disposition, his pliability, his responsibility to inherited discipline, exhibited him during the whole of this period in an extremely attractive and docile light. Very rare were his movements of revolt. He is expected all the time, under the swollen programmes of intellectual consumption placed before him, to make a deep assimilation of very difficult and diverse subjects; but he is not in the least intellectual: he is only human and intelligent.

And so we find General Bruce, to whom the Prince was always supremely loyal, faithfully recording disparaging observations upon the growth of his pupil's stature. To me it is amazing

that a boy so educated, so over-tutored, so over-governed, should have reached a stature so great. He was brought up secluded from the world. Except for the very occasional companionship of a few Eton boys, he was hardly allowed to see a young man for fear that he might be contaminated. He was not allowed to rely upon his own innate manly qualities to meet and defeat, as all of us must try to do, the temptations of his age and sex. Sufficient consideration has not, in my judgment, been given to the difficulties of his youth. The Prince Consort was a man academic in type and character: not in the least in sympathy with the budding dispositions—how difficult to explain—of a son. The only idea of the boy's father was to educate him. And education meant eight hours a day of General Bruce or of General Bruce's equally dogged deputies. So over and over again we are confronted by General Bruce's complaints that the boy is not developing either in solid knowledge or in learned conversation. The truth, of course, is evident. The Prince of Wales was doomed day by day and night by night to listen to conversation of middle-aged men who probably had nothing to say of absorbing interest to one whose life was dawning, and who were all talking with a view

to educating. What a hideous fate! A young man must always rely for his education upon older men. But the camouflaged extension of education to the whole of social life, when all that a high-spirited temper imperiously calls for is absolutely denied, is surely intolerable. It is to the eternal credit of King Edward that he supported for so long and without apparent impatience a régime which would have ruined nineteen out of twenty of the young men whom I know to-day.

Nor was relief to come with the death of the Prince Consort, which deeply moved the Prince. The maintenance of this *pia hereditas* of tedious, intensive, and largely futile labour was passionately insisted upon by the Queen, almost, it seemed, as one more way of demonstrating her love for her dead husband. The Prince was then nineteen, of an age to long for, and with a record of conduct which had deserved, a reasonable freedom. "No human power," wrote the Queen to King Leopold, "will make me swerve from *what he* decided and wished. I apply this particularly to our children, Bertie, etc., for whose future he had traced everything *so* carefully." One cannot help wishing that "Bertie" had dug his heels in a little at this point. There was a

limit, after all, to the weapons in a mother's arsenal, even though that mother was a Queen.

Queen Victoria was a very great woman ; but great men and great women have made mistakes. She has become so much a dominating figure of history that one may say quite plainly that she made an incredible error in not more closely associating her son in the responsibilities of government after the death of the Prince Consort. To put the matter perfectly plain, she did not really quite play her own part in the years which I am considering ; and she would not allow the Prince of Wales to play his part. And after all, the Queen had loved dancing and innocent amusement well enough before her marriage.

We have observed that King Edward—as he was afterwards to become—could not claim that he was a great statesman or had an extremely sophisticated intellect. But those who knew him best realised always that he united to an armoury of immense dignity the qualities of a swift and intuitive perception. He did not succeed to his inheritance until he was comparatively old, but when he succeeded he was already a personality and not merely a Prince. The British people is very curious in this respect. It judges slowly

both of its politicians and of its princes. But, in a well-known phrase, "It commonly attains to think right." King Edward was loved by this people because he exhibited in his character and in his life alike their strength and their weakness. We must not exaggerate, although it was considerable, the part which he played in the statecraft of his generation. To talk of him as pre-conceiving, and then of determining, high international policies would be to use courtier talk. But he had none the less a robust and extremely helpful conception of the realities of politics, which often would have exceeded his ability to define either the realities or the politics. These observations do not imply any disparagement. Great Kings, when they are dead, do not depend upon flattery. If they have been great as Kings, their ultimate valuation will depend upon candid and accurate statement, rather than upon adulation or sycophancy.

In the conception which I have formed of that constitutional monarch who most completely answers to the type of the wise king, I place King Edward very high. He was, if you choose to press the point, not at all gifted in the processes of abstract thought ; but he had a shrewd conviction of what the ordinary people of the

country were thinking. He was, in fact, a typical and a characteristic Englishman.

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I have in perspective said so much that is favourable of this important biography that I may perhaps, without giving offence, call attention to one or two inaccuracies in the edition which is before me.

King Edward, for instance, was the great-grandson of George III, not the grandson, as the author describes him on p. 100 (last line).

The relationship between the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg and Queen Alexandra as set out on p. 120 is surely contradicted by the author's own genealogical table.

Nor did Prince Francis of Teck ever command the Royal Dragoons as stated on p. 676. As a lieutenant he was one of the regimental mission to Berlin, which was headed by the Commanding Officer, Colonel Tomkinson.

I have not myself noted any other inaccuracies. The number is not considerable in a large volume which deals with so many issues of fact. The book should be judged as a whole, not by slight and unimportant matter of this kind, but by the far more vital question, how far does it present a true and faithful picture of King Edward as he

was? Will a reader who never had the good fortune to know the King rise from the book with a reasonably accurate understanding of the man as he was, with his strength and his weakness? On the whole, and subject to the qualifications already made plain, I think that he will. If I am right, the author has succeeded in a very difficult and a very delicate task.

He points out in an interesting passage that a constant feature may be observed in all King Edward's references to books. His letters contain many such references. He hardly ever says, "I have read such a book and my opinion of it is as follows." He almost always says, "I must read such and such a book"; or, "I intend to read it." One is indeed reminded by the strange and recurrent circumstance of the remark attributed to Disraeli when an author presented him with a book. "Dear Mr. — It is very kind of you to have sent me your book. I shall lose no time in reading it. Yours ever, B. Disraeli."

Mr. Gladstone once said in an epigram, which was both witty and true, "The Prince of Wales knows everything except what is written in books." But it must nevertheless be clearly borne in mind that he was a close and constant

reader of newspapers. I once heard him say, "I get all my information from the papers." This was on an occasion when he was annoyed because something appeared in the Press before he had been advised of it.

The Prince's knowledge of people and of their pedigrees, and of their domestic affairs, was so extraordinary as to be quite uncanny. Both at home and in France he would often inform his friends of family and collateral relationships of which they themselves had little definite knowledge.

The author dwells on the Prince of Wales's friendship with Delcassé. This suggests an interesting page of history, and one which the Prince filled with the accomplishment of a finished man of the world. The Marquis du Breteuil once invited him to breakfast. The invitation was accepted, and his host asked the Prince whom he would like to meet. "Pray let me see Delcassé," was the reply. This was the first meeting between the Prince and the French Foreign Minister. But the former was not content with a merely casual acquaintance with one whom he liked and admired; he used his great social influence in Paris to link Delcassé up with French society. The result was not unimportant.

French Government officials and French society have not always been in warm sympathy. It is, on the whole, better for the French nation that the relations between them should be good. The Prince undoubtedly made a considerable contribution to this result. When he became King he specially insisted that the members of his Embassy should cultivate private as well as official relations with the leading political figures in France; and in the same way, with a very interesting thoroughness, he took pains to bring members of the Napoleon family, such as Princess Mathilde, into touch with Orleanists and Ministers of the Republic. It was particularly noticed, for instance, that at the Embassy he himself introduced Princess Mathilde to Mme Waddington, who, as everyone remembers, had been Ambassadors in London and wrote more than one volume of very interesting memoirs.

Sir Sidney Lee might, perhaps, have called more attention to the undoubted physical courage of King Edward. He was always quite unperturbed. Since Thackeray dealt faithfully with them, the eighteenth-century Georges have not had a very good name in history. But whatever their demerits may have been, they were all incapable of fear. In this respect at least King Edward

was no unworthy son of the House of Hanover. The idea of personal danger never seemed to occur to him. On a visit to Brussels an assassin fired several shots at him as he sat in a railway carriage. The bullets passed over his head and in disagreeable proximity to it, as most owners of such a head would have supposed. The Prince was completely unmoved, not even rising from his seat, and with a degree of composure which almost seemed an affectation resumed the conversation in which he was engaged. I suspect that there was in his temperament some easy quality of fatalism. He was at Cannes, I think in the year 1887, when the earthquake came. Most people left their beds and rushed into the streets. The Prince stayed in his, and resumed his slumbers almost before the rumbling ceased. I suspect that he had thought the matter out, or reached a true conclusion without thinking it out, that he was as safe in bed as anywhere else. His complete sang-froid upon this occasion produced no small impression upon those who were about him.

At this point there occurs to me a matter upon which a word of not unfriendly criticism may be said of the book before me. It deals at great length with many persons, and records most conscientiously many incidents. But it does not,

I think, do justice to the tact, the personality, and the social charm of the Princess of Wales, of that lady whom we knew as Queen Alexandra. It may be the intention of the author to reserve his panegyrics for a later volume ; but I think this a mistake, for, in my judgment, this distinguished lady played a more important part as Princess of Wales even than as Queen Alexandra. Queen Victoria, so to speak, caught her very young ; and without losing time began to warn her against any attempt to inoculate the Prince with Danish prepossessions. The Princess of Wales never obtruded her natural love and loyalty for Denmark upon those who were associated in one way or another with her new life. I am not even aware of any occasion on which she expressed indignation at our attitude, neither very kindly nor very dignified, to Denmark in 1864. Nor do I recall that she ever allowed her hatred of Prussia to colour her official life, except that she resolutely refused to go to Berlin except upon formal occasions when it was plainly necessary to do so ; and in private life she trod a difficult path with incredible tact, dignity, charm, and patience. She gained and preserved to the end the confidence and affection of Queen Victoria, and by her ever-growing popularity rendered

a service to her husband which has not perhaps received as much public recognition as it deserves.

I recall an instance of the King's courtesy and tact as shown to myself when I had first the honour of being presented to him. He was a great friend socially of a most delightful lady, the late Lady Savile, and used frequently to dine at Lord Savile's house. After the first General Election of 1910, when the Liberals lost 100 seats, their position became difficult and even dangerous, inasmuch as they were dependent upon the Irish vote, and serious controversies arose between themselves and the Irish on the question whether Home Rule should have precedence in the legislative programme. So critical did the situation become that many Cabinet Ministers spoke openly of the prospect of an early resignation. In the end, of course, as we all know now, these differences were composed, but while they were at their height, and it seemed quite possible that the Conservatives might be called upon to form a Government at short notice, it occurred to King Edward that he had not made the acquaintance of some of the younger members of the party who had emerged between the years 1906 and 1910. He accordingly asked Lady Savile to give a party, and himself suggested almost all the

names of those who should be invited. When he came into the room, he walked round the circle shaking hands with those whom he already knew, while those whom he did not were presented to him. When it came to my turn, he said: "Ah, yes! I read your speeches with growing interest." This has always seemed to me an exquisitely polite thing for a great King to say to a young man. Consider, for instance, the implication—that he had always been a student of these efforts and had noted a culmination of value and interest. The study may have been imaginative, but it was at least a very kindly imagination. I was once asked whether I said anything in reply. I countered with Johnson's famous observation after the interview in the Royal library: "Sir, it was not for me to bandy compliments with my Sovereign."

Before closing this note, I turn once again for a moment to consider the question how far King Edward really influenced public, and more particularly, foreign policy. I have already made it plain that he did not do so in the sense that he conceived and induced his Ministers to undertake a scheme of policy which they had not thought out for themselves. Such a suggestion is treated as frankly ridiculous by the still surviving members

of the Government which made the "Entente." But, whilst this is true, it is none the less the fact that the King's broad instincts and intuitions in the matter of our European interests were sound. He greatly distrusted and disliked his nephew, the ex-Kaiser, and saw with unerring eyes through the veneer of that young man's treacherous civilities. I have no doubt that he discerned very plainly in him, long before others in this country who had not the same opportunity of forming a judgment as he, that the Kaiser was a possible, and even a probable, enemy in the field. And in another way, the King made a great contribution. The French people, and particularly those of them who live in Paris, are very sensitive to an atmosphere, and swift to discern and value social charm. The King was undoubtedly, for almost all his life, the most popular Englishman in France. And in this way he made a very powerful contribution to the growth of a feeling of real friendliness which greatly simplified the task of statesmen.

Sir Sidney Lee has laid us all under an obligation by compelling us once again, in days when memories are short, to recreate in our minds the figure of this courteous, charming, conscientious, and kindly Englishman.

XIII

LORD CURZON AND INDIA

LORD CURZON'S last work is entitled *British Government in India*. Had this been an expressive title, the present writer could hardly have reviewed it. But it deals with everything except politics. History, art, archaeology, architecture—such are the topics on which Lord Curzon loves to dwell.

The two noble volumes not only furnish us with a rare literary feast, but in their scope and detail provide the world with a posthumous exhibition of Lord Curzon's amazing industry. When one remembers his distaste for dictation, his dislike—perhaps his disability—to delegate to anyone any of the drudgery of research or compilation, when one reviews the manifold and multiform interests which—apart from the cares of high office—claimed his consideration and in turn absorbed his attention, one cannot but marvel at an output demanding the most patient investigation, the closest scrutiny, the most careful

sifting, as well as the command of stately language with which the author was so opulently endowed.

Lord Curzon suggests that *British Government in India* is a debt long overdue to India generally, and to Calcutta in particular. It is a debt which he constituted for himself when in the enjoyment of his Viceroyalty, which he has constantly acknowledged, and which he has ceaselessly endeavoured to pay. More than a score of years ago he had begun to collect his cherished material, but the claims first of public life and then of office imperiously asserted themselves, so that the task of cutting out, piecing together, and colouring the rich stuff he drew into his hands had to be suspended awhile, resumed with long intervals, and finally completed in what the author alludes to—with unconscious pathos—as his odd moments of leisure.

“How do you contrive to do your day’s work with all its accessories?” was the puzzled inquiry of one of his earliest and most intimate friends when “Foreign Affairs” were specially exacting. “By working sixteen hours a day,” was the quiet—and absolutely truthful—reply. Lord Curzon tells us how in Calcutta he would daily take his chair in the great south room at 10 a.m., and rarely leave it, with the exception of an hour or

so for meals, a public function, or a short private drive, until 2 a.m. the following morning. Always when in office the same austere curriculum was followed in London, except that for the short private drive was substituted the still shorter journey between Carlton House Terrace and Downing Street. Between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. official and other papers had been closely read and conscientiously noted, and when at 2 a.m. the hardly driven body sought—but seldom sank to—rest, the tireless brain was still functioning with undiminished vitality. The labours of the day over were indeed regarded as chiefly valuable in their relation to the labours of the day to come. Work was the sum and substance of Lord Curzon's life; for him, whatever contributed to, ennobled, and enriched that work must be carefully considered; whatever detracted from it must be ruthlessly rejected. And so one greets with real pleasure the sentence—penned when perhaps the pen was just beginning to be loose in the writer's hand—that the “writing of this book has been to me far less a labour than a recreation.”

India was Lord Curzon's first love; he told us so publicly and on more than one occasion; his love for her was surely strong till death, for

it is said that with some of the last breath which fluttered from his lips he instructed those around him about the pages which he had traced with little less than the finger of love itself. And now we learn a delightful secret, for we mark and learn that it was the alleged correspondence between his stately home in Derbyshire and the noble building reared by Lord Mornington which first fixed his boyish attention on the great Asiatic Dependency and implanted the desire—if not the determination—to translate himself sooner or later from Kedleston in the Midlands to Kedleston in Bengal.

Through his two volumes, from introduction to index, Lord Curzon moves about among his facts and figures, his periods and his perrons—from Clive's conquests to Lady Canning's chintzes—with an ease and intimacy which serve to set a seal on his accuracy (the date attributed to Lord Mayo is obviously a printer's error), and to convince again and again that his affection for his subject is nurtured by a profound knowledge of it.

Roughly, the first volume describes the circumstances in which lived and moved the eminent persons who are summoned to appear before us in the second ; the great houses, and the great

rooms within them, are to be accounted of scarcely less historic interest than their famous occupants. Lord Curzon understands, and wants his readers to understand, all the meaning of a room. He would remind us what notable parts rooms have played in the drama of history, what scenes of momentous importance and of lasting interest have been enacted in them—from the Upper Chamber at Jerusalem to the Salle des Batailles at Versailles, from the kitchen where Alfred burnt the cakes to the railway-carriage where Foch dismayed the delegates. And yet of a thousand persons who could put a finger to the date of an occasion, not ten might certify its venue. It is in the big room in Government House that Lord Curzon loved to linger: here Wellesley dictated haughty replies to the exasperating censures of the Directors in London; here Bentinck threshed out with Macaulay the new scheme of education which has revolutionised India, and had more momentous consequences than any decision of Indian policy during the past century; here Lord Auckland bent his head over the agonising news from Kabul; here Lord Dalhousie penned those masterly minutes which have been the model and despair of his successors; here Lord Dufferin turned his polished phrases; here Lords Lans-

downe and Roberts planned the strategy of another Afghan campaign; here, also, though he does not say it, Lord Curzon imposed his own imperious will, gave effect to his vision, and drafted the famous prose upon a higher level than the most cultured of his predecessors could attain; here the most sumptuous of Durbars was conceived; here Bengal was rent in twain.

The theme of official dwelling-places is, of course, traced back to the thatched hut where Job Charnock "smoked and drank and did his huckstering with the natives, and lived with his native wife, the unconscious forerunner and father of dominion." I admit I winced a little at this; I adhere to my liking for Charnock; I would rather dwell on his pluck than hint at his pilfering. Enough for me that the Directors spoke of his "good and faithful service"; that they dubbed him "honest Mr. Charnock," and scarcely qualified their praise in referring to him as "a person that has served us faithfully above twenty years, and hath never, as we understand, been a prowler for himself beyond what was just and modest." And I have always relished the tradition that Charnock married a young and lovely Hindu widow whom he had forcibly dragged from the funeral pile, and by her he

begat several children. Lord Curzon admits the children, but refuses the marriage lines ; in the baptismal register, he bluntly says, " there is no mention of the mother's name, a thing almost invariably done in the case of legitimate children."

The removal of the ancient capital to Delhi was a draught which Lord Curzon could never allow himself to swallow. While the circumstances which attended his resignation are touched on lightly and without bitterness, his laments on the translation of the seat of Government are strewn up and down the pages. " An historic city," he murmurs, " was deprived of her pride of place " ; and again, " The Government of India was banished to crumbling graveyards." The finance of India he believed to be still burdened with an indeterminate charge of many millions ; " there is hardly an authority on India, English or Indian, who does not disapprove and deplore the rapidly formed decision of 1912." There lies before the writer a letter from Lord Curzon, written just when the momentous announcement had been made ; dismay and anger can be traced on every line—dismay that an irreparable break should have been made with a noble past, anger that so large a step should have been taken without consulting—or at least informing—Lord

Hardinge's predecessors in office, who would have urged their opinion, born of experience, against it.

With his second volume, Lord Curzon beckons into his arena, and submits for examination, successive Governors-General and Viceroy, being careful to explain that the latter title has no statutory sanction and that the true designation of the Head of the Indian Government is the Governor-General. For many of the rulers who pass under review the reviewer has something little more than faint praise. There is a modest disclaimer of any desire to pass "final judgment" on Warren Hastings. Cornwallis has "quite mediocre intellectual gifts, but does his best in an honest, common-sense way." Shore is an "upright, dull, respectable man," who certainly found his true home in the Clapham Sect. Ellenborough's errors spring from "lack of self-restraint and overweening temper." Dalhousie as an Imperial administrator and an organiser of peace is "second to none of the men who have built the British Empire in the East," but . . . In spite of the "buts" Dalhousie seems to share with Lord Canning Lord Curzon's loftiest tributes.

Lord Curzon's keen sense of humour, a quality with which his obituary notices were slow to

credit him, is especially pungent in his exposure of Lord Wellesley's pomps and vanities, his public peculiarities and private peccadilloes, which, however, do not prevent his being "actuated in all that he did or planned in India by the highest sense of duty, always operating, however, as a gracious dispensation from a benign Providence." Curiously enough, Lord Curzon does not illustrate his just condemnation of the presence of Lord Hardinge with Lord Gough's army by quoting the letter of Colonel Wellesley, who with fraternal frankness wrote to the Governor-General in 1799: "Your presence in the camp, instead of giving confidence to the General, would, in fact, deprive him of the command of the army. If I were in General Harris's situation, and you joined the army, I should leave it."

In his note on Lord Hastings—"an excellent and hard-working ruler"—we learn that the disasters on the Turf of his spendthrift grandson were among the most vivid recollections of Lord Curzon's childhood. Hermit's victory in the Derby, which caused Lord Hastings' financial crash, and induced his untimely death, was scored when Lord Curzon was eight years old—surely a tender age at which to take an interest in racing, a sport to which Lord Curzon, as an adult, was

a total stranger. Lord Curzon also alludes to the cruel treatment meted out to Lady Flora Hastings. Queen Victoria excused herself on that occasion on the plea of her own extreme youth. The same pretext could not have been used with regard to the Sovereign's hostile attitude to the daughter of Lord Dalhousie.

Lord Lawrence is not one of Lord Curzon's favourites ; perhaps because the one was a good deal what the other most definitely was not. Lawrence was rough in manner and often almost rugged in dress ; he was intolerant in debate, destitute of oratory, and poorly equipped with learning, though he spoke Hindustani fluently, if incorrectly. His personal economy was extreme, though he was generous to a fault in charity ; in his religion, which he rigidly practised, he was a professed and profound Evangelical. Lord Curzon was not blind to Lawrence's "superlative services," but sums up his tenure of office as an illustration of the "undesirability of raising even the most eminent of Indian civilians to the Vice-regal throne,"

Sir Bartle Frere Lord Curzon dismisses with a scornful back-hander as Lawrence's "capable but unruly subordinate." With subordinates—always excepting private secretaries—Lord Cur-

zon has little concern. Of fierce capability there can be but little doubt; of his unruliness there is little evidence to adduce. The two men differed as to frontier policy. Lawrence above all deprecated any line of policy which might give needless offence to Russia; Frere sought to secure a definite and friendly relation with the Afghan, and pointed to the danger of a territory under Russian influence permeated by Russian agents, while an English envoy could not show his face over our border. There never arose any shadow of dispute between the two as to any action on Frere's part, and their discussions were confined chiefly to finance, which Lawrence's secretariat had centralised to a hitherto unknown point. Their personal relations were wholly cordial, and though politeness was not a weapon in Lawrence's armoury, Frere could write that "Sir John is officially as civil to me as to anyone who does not belong to the Punjab or to the County of Delhi or to Exeter Hall."

Opinions may differ as to the merits and value of the portraits which Lord Curzon hangs before our eyes; there can be little reproach to be thrown on his background with its wealth of sober hues, its skilful shadows, its correctitude of order. And in that background there towers

the figure of Lord Curzon himself, majestic in mien, magnificent in gesture, magniloquent in phrase, *facile princeps* among the rulers of India ; infallible in pronouncement, irrefutable in argument, and withal an historian who can draft a history intense with interest and weighty in worth, and present it in the guise of a delightful narrative.

For the purposes of his biography of Lord Curzon, Lord Ronaldshay who, it is believed, has already made so much progress in a work which he is specially qualified to perform, will find to his hand a continuous series of official and private papers arranged "in a wonderful order," and carpeting all the ground which he will have to traverse. He will have much to examine and to sift ; perhaps much to reject ; there will be little to mask and nothing to conceal. The writer must not be hurried in his task, and if it is well done there will emerge, though the breezes of controversy may blow for a while, a statesman to whom will surely be accorded a profound salute. But the historian, when he approaches an outstanding period before addressing himself to unpublished documents, may perhaps skim through two volumes—one stout and the other slender—which take diametrically opposite views

of Lord Curzon in India. "Look on this picture and on that."

Mr. Lovat Fraser, in his *India under Lord Curzon, and After*, was perhaps suffering from a touch of (what Macaulay might have called) "lues Curzoniana"—though his later utterances suggest that Mr. Fraser had completely shaken it off. The eulogy is consistent, almost to monotony; Lord Curzon's merits are all his own; his mistakes, if such could be charged to him, would be due to his subordinates or his surroundings; roses are strewn all the way; Lord Curzon is escorted by his chronicler to a pinnacle from which he is bidden to look down alike on his predecessors and on posterity.

On the other hand, a writer veiled as *Twenty-eight Years in India*, in an open letter to Lord Rosebery, which he pleasantly entitled "Lord Curzon's Failure," would tear Lord Curzon's work in India to shreds and cast the pieces on the dust-heap. What Lord Rosebery thought of the letter—perhaps, as it was an open one, it never reached him—has never transpired, but the public, for whom it was intended, probably recognised in Mr. Lovat Fraser's output, after allowing due discount for obvious partisanship, a more reliable and certainly more readable record of an appoint-

ment made by Queen Victoria and resigned—to that monarch's infinite regret—into the hands of King Edward.

It may be at once too early and too late for anyone to deal exhaustively with all that Lord Curzon planned and performed in India, but the careful reader of the two fine volumes now on every well-furnished library shelf will recognise that in nominating an Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs to succeed Lord Elgin, Lord Salisbury made up his mind to match a big man with a big opportunity,

“Remember,” said Queen Victoria to the outgoing Ambassador in 1893, “that my last two Ambassadors in Paris have both been Viceroy in India, the highest post a British subject can occupy.” The remark contained, of course, a delicate unofficial hint that the British Sovereign expected a suitable choice to be made in the matter of a successor to Monsieur Waddington; it was meant also to remind the peoples of Europe what that august and astute lady considered the finest jewel in her Imperial crown. No one knew better than the venerable Queen, with all her simple tastes and dowdy habiliments, the meaning of the word “splendour,” and “splendid” was an epithet which could never be detached from the

man whom in 1898 she selected to represent her—and to carry out her very precise wishes—in her Indian Empire. Seven hundred thousand square miles and a hundred and twenty-four million souls had been brought under her direct sway ; her life was closing, and the next nomination of an Indian pro-Consul would scarcely be hers ; she brought her long experience and her personal love for India to bear on the names which were submitted, and, with little hesitation, declared in favour of a comparatively young man, with whom and whose family she had little, if any, acquaintance. Ample justification can be shown for her choice. Whatever Lord Curzon was *not*, he *was* a great deal more than a great Viceroy. To the conscientiousness of Lord Canning, the sagacity inherent in both Lords Elgin, the courage of Lord Lawrence, the faculty of exciting enthusiasm which marked Lord Mayo, the dignity and sense of art of which Lord Northbrook gave abundant proof, the sheer hard work of Lord Ripon, the literary qualities and resourcefulness of Lord Lytton, the statesmanship of Lord Dufferin, and the diplomacy bred-in-the-bone of Lord Lansdowne, Lord Curzon added the fire of his own genius. He seems to have summed up in himself the qualities of all his prede-

cessors, and to have been splendid beyond them all ; splendid in appearance, splendid in outlook, splendid in open-handedness, splendid in oratory, splendid in success, and, on rare occasions, equally splendid in failure.

It is in no part of this paper to attempt any review of a famous rule, but it is possible just to draw attention to two or three very human measures which the ruler instituted with infinite care and regarded as his largest legacies. Lord Curzon's educational reforms, his land revenue policy, and his care for agriculture were all of the first-rate importance, and they must not in the flux of time be allowed to escape from their sponsorship. The land question, in a country where nine-tenths of the population is rural, lies at the back of almost every other question, and, in a word, the question which Lord Curzon set himself to answer was not as to how the local Governments could get in their money, but as to how the condition of the people could be bettered, and how agriculture could be developed on right and reasonable lines for their benefit.

Of agriculture Lord Curzon personally knew little ; he had taken no part in the management of his paternal estates ; he had enjoyed little

experience of country life ; his own life had been that of a traveller and a dweller in cities ; and there is something of pathos in the reflection that he was hesitating whether—when his official career should close—he would take up residence in Oxford as Chancellor of the University, or go back to the land and devote himself wholly to his interests in Derbyshire—the latter alternative finding favour in his eyes. But he knew that without intelligence and science, agriculture must languish, and while merely leading the ryot to better, if still quite simple, methods, he lifted the craft itself on to a far higher level in India than it had before reached. He created an Imperial Agricultural Department, and gave it in charge of an Inspector-General ; he exalted and expanded the agricultural service ; he sought advice from Europe, and summoned experts to put it into effect ; he encouraged experimental farms ; he did all he could for Indian cotton and Indian cattle. With the £30,000 which was given to him absolutely for the good of the Indian people, he founded the Research Laboratory, from which rose the Agricultural College at Pusa.

In the region of education Lord Curzon was treading on familiar ground, and the education for which he pronounced, and which he strove

to promulgate, was education as he always saw it, quite distinct from mere instruction ; for him "how to learn" always took precedence of "what to learn." Yet perhaps in no other department than this did the winds of hostility whistle more shrilly in his teeth. He was nothing daunted, and it may surely be claimed for him that he weathered, with head held high, the storm of criticism which assailed him from those who had regarded education as a close preserve, that he improved every section of the educational system, that he set the Universities to work out their own salvation, and that he sought to give to the humblest of his Sovereign's Indian subjects a chance of judging things some day for themselves.

Less than anything else would it be seemly or suitable to comment on the battle royal which raged about the subject of military administration—except, in justice to Lord Curzon's many friends in the Government of that day, to remind oneself that his resignation was due not to the main ruling of the Cabinet on the matter of Dual Control, but to their refusal to appoint his nominee to the newly constituted post of Supply Member.

Two thoughts in connection with this subject often appeal to me, and always seem to reflect

on the largeness of Lord Curzon's character. When he first proceeded to India it was a matter of common knowledge—and none knew it better than himself—that the military house required a great deal of setting in order.

“I do not conceal from you,” he wrote in 1900, “that there are many respects in which Army Administration in India seems to be capable of great reform. I see absurd and uncontrolled expenditure; I observe a lack of method and system; I detect slackness and jobbery; I lament, in some respects, a want of fibre and tone.” Something less than a really great man might well have chosen the military instruments he had to his hand to carry out a task of Imperial importance, and thus secure for himself, as director of their labours, a good deal of military credit. Lord Curzon preferred to wait—and to wait for two years—until the man should be available who, as he believed, was pre-eminently capable of effectively renumbering, reorganising, and redistributing the Indian Forces of the Crown.

And in the years which followed Lord Kitchener's tragic death there must have presented themselves many occasions on which Lord Curzon could quite aptly have represented his own case in the

controversy of 1905 in a light wholly favourable to himself. On the technical points—as on any other where he was known to have differed sharply from Lord Kitchener—he was always and altogether silent; on all other matters he was eager and forward to record his unstinted eulogy of a great Patriot.

There will be, perhaps, some like myself who, as they lay down the story of British Government in India, will turn back to re-read a glowing passage which seems to expose in a moment the writer's constant search after Beauty, wherever, and however simply, Beauty can be found. "Neither, even at this distance of time," he writes, "is it possible to forget the solemn pageantry of the evening, as we returned by the river bank, in the fading twilight, when, through a pall of mist and smoke, the tall mists and spars of the big sailing ships made patterns in ink against the sky, when the newly lit street-lamps twinkled like fire-flies along the Strand, and amid the gathering gloom the crimson sun sank down to his grave in the black and rushing waters."

And there may be many who, musing over a life so tense with interest, so sparkling with enthusiasm, so rich in result, will feel sure that Lord Curzon belongs to that category of public

men who will grow and grow in stature as they recede further and further into history; nay, more, that he may perhaps be classed with those servants of the Crown—to whom all our history points—who spend their lives in the service of the country, and to whom their country only does full justice long after they have passed away.

XIV

THE TRUTH ABOUT "MARGOT ASQUITH"

LADY OXFORD—for so we must in these days describe the lady who was so well known, first as Margot Tennant and afterwards as Mrs. Asquith—has published another book, consisting, indeed, in the main of new material, but very similar in its outlook and range to her well-known Autobiography. The place in literature of this kind of contemporary gossip, reminiscence, personal valuations—give it whatever name you like—is very difficult to determine. When it is extraordinarily well done its permanent place in the literature of the period is assured; for it will illustrate habits, manners, and morals in a manner which will both enrich and humanise the labours of graver historians hereafter.

The Diary of Pepys will always, of course, furnish the classic illustration of this truth. But to generalise from the case of Pepys would evidently be absurd; for he wrote down everything that came into his mind simply because

he believed that his cipher was undecipherable. The Diary of Evelyn is of almost equal contemporary interest; and it is a truer illustration of the possible value of this kind of writing, when carried out conscientiously and with sincerity, than the Diary of Pepys, because it was compiled in the certain conviction that it would never be read. The Greville Memoirs, though Greville painted upon a larger canvas with a graver and more responsible brush than that of Lady Oxford, afford perhaps the nearest parallel to the class of literature which I am making a superficial attempt to examine.

Let me, however, make my view plain that when the last criticism has been uttered, and the last disparagement made, the books of Lady Oxford will survive and will afford much useful guidance to the historian of the future, both as to what did happen and as to what did not happen in her day and generation.

She is very clever and very vivacious, if an intensely egotistical lady. She writes of Mr. Winston Churchill (in effect) that no man can be a competent navigator who only looks at a single star. Surely for Lady Oxford, the authoress of so many works the central and dominating personality of which she has herself been, to utter

such a taunt must require all that fortitude which we know her to possess. But the egotism in her case is not merely personal, though the personal element looms very large. She is like a lioness fighting for herself, her husband, and her children. Her egotism attempts to fling itself round all of them as resolutely as it is used to enlarge and render important her own personality. And yet no one can read these pages, or any which she has written, without realising that, in spite of all the egotism and the occasional indiscretions, the authoress of this book is a warm-hearted woman, very acute in observation, very swift in comprehension, very tenacious of friendship, very mindful of injury sustained.

There is something positively naïve about the conviction perpetually recurring—almost on every page—that everything relating to herself must necessarily interest every reader. As a matter of fact, in conversation Lady Oxford is always most delightful. She talks sympathetically, intelligently, and acutely about the great people whom she has known so well, often enlisting the "ego" only so far as to draw upon her own vivid and almost unmatched narrative powers. She has, indeed, known, I suppose, for a period of thirty-five years almost everyone who has played

a great part in English life. The accuracy of many of her autobiographical stories has been impeached from time to time in many authoritative quarters. But whether her recollection has in some cases played her false or not, it is unquestionably true that, with her pen in her hand, Lady Oxford is quite incapable of being dull.

The most astonishing thing in the book and the most inexplicable is undoubtedly to be found in Lady Oxford's references to Mr. Lloyd George. At the time when the book appeared, the Liberal Party, as we all know, was reunited. Lady Oxford, as far as she was concerned, put the public stamp upon this happily regained unity by walking on to a Liberal platform arm-in-arm with Mr. Lloyd George. Mr. Lloyd George, after a record of incomparable public distinction, whatever errors he has committed—and others have committed errors, too—was now the leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Commons. And yet I find Lady Oxford writing in her book :

"An intelligent Frenchman asked me if the British had much ill-feeling against the French, and if there is anyone left who believes in Mr. Lloyd George.

"I answered that Mr. Lloyd George's absence of political principle, incapacity of straight deal-

ing, and pathetic ignorance of foreign affairs had brought a dazzling career into seclusion."

Many people will express themselves in different terms, either of praise or censure, in the attempt to measure Mr. Lloyd George's career as a whole. He is, I believe, acknowledged by the general body of his fellow-countrymen to have rendered brilliant and unforgettable service in the darkest days which this country has confronted since the Napoleonic wars. He has received in generous recognition of his exertions the freedom of about thirty English cities. He was now, if I understand the exiguous politics of what remains of the Liberal Party aright, the second in command under Lord Oxford. And at this moment Lady Oxford publishes to the world this estimate of Lord Oxford's principal lieutenant and representative in the House of Commons. I do not profess to understand these things.

It is perhaps unfair to treat Lady Oxford's politics too seriously; for she has never had, with all her gifts, any coherent outlook upon the political world, in broad or philosophic perspective. She has always been far too volatile. She has always looked upon the political world through the eyes of an intense egotism; or at least through the eyes of those political personali-

ties with whom she has been at the moment associated, and whom she has supposed to be necessary to her immediate political purposes. She rejoices, for instance, at the fall of the Coalition, not because she had made any sober calculation as to whether that fall could advance the Liberal cause, but because it publicly stilettoed one whom she deemed an implacable enemy of Lord Oxford, and one whose spectacular and actual successes had been as gall and wormwood to her for a period of years.

I do not carry this particular reflection further, because it is ungenerous to probe too deeply into the dissensions of a party which has perished because it founded itself upon a false philosophy. At the present moment I do not know how many follow Lord Oxford, Mr. Lloyd George, Sir John Simon, Mr. Runciman, and Captain Guest. I suppose that I should strike a generous average if I gave them eight followers apiece in the House of Commons. And really, in the face of this ludicrous result, and in spite of all the friendship and admiration which I have for Lady Oxford, I must be allowed to say quite plainly that it ill becomes those who have shattered into fragments the superb majority which they inherited from Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman

to speak and write in terms of such intellectual contempt of their opponents. Lady Oxford writes, for instance, very contemptuously of "Birkenhead, Churchill, and Co." The firm so described may have been a good one or a bad one, but it is, after all, still carrying on business. Lady Oxford's firm—she will forgive me for making the matter quite plain—is in very discreditable liquidation.

The real truth is that Lady Oxford's book is far more interesting when she deals with social or personal matters than with questions of high politics. In such affairs she is a shrewd, vivacious and animated observer; high politics she never understood, or at least always failed to disentangle them from an atmosphere of personalities. She had, indeed, a sense of humour; but she sometimes seems determined to make us forget it. For instance (on p. 223), she says, quoting a phrase of mine:

"There are some 'glittering prizes' not worth having, and leaders, however brilliant, are apt to become ridiculous, if not extinct, when they are sure of neither their gold nor their followers."

How is it possible that a tactful woman of the world can have used such an expression without perceiving its ironic reactions upon her and hers?

It is, in truth, upon the *joie de vivre*, the vivacity, and the indestructible youth of Lady Oxford that posterity will concentrate. She is often indiscreet; her judgment, except upon personalities, is often wrong; but she has a broad philosophy of life which will appeal to many if it repels others. "A horse to ride: a book to read: a sun to make love in!" Such, she decides, are the most important things in life. If it be the right horse, the right book, the right person to make love to, even a stickler for pleasure might compromise at least upon this point with Lady Oxford.

XV

ELOQUENCE

IT is easier to understand the meaning of eloquence than to define it. Johnson in his dictionary describes it as "the power of speaking with fluency and elegance," while the New English Dictionary adds "force and appropriateness" to this. The ancients, and it is of them I am writing here, leaving classical British and modern eloquence for later consideration, fully realised the difficulty of definition. Quintilian, the Roman orator, collected the principal Greek and Roman attempts to solve the problem. "What is eloquence?" he asked. Some, he says, defined it as the art of persuasion. This is indeed Plato's view. But, argues Quintilian, "money too persuades, and influence, and the authority and importance of the speaker," and so also may a trick. He recalls the pleader who tore open his client's robe and disclosed his honourable scars, thus securing an acquittal by the patriotic jury. There was also the man, impeached by Cato, who successfully brought his children into court as

mute appeals for mercy, a practice not unknown in various forms in modern times. And the divine Phryne, accused of impiety, unveiled her bosom and was at once set free by the impressionable judges. Was Phryne eloquent? asks Quintilian.

Aristotle, he continues, defined eloquence as "leading men by speech to do what the speaker desires." To this Quintilian objects that harlots, flatterers, and seducers also must on this basis be considered eloquent. He mentions other definitions—"the ability to discover persuasive arguments," "the art of speaking," "the art of deceiving," "skill in giving pleasure," and so forth.

Then, summing up, he offers his own version. Eloquence, he says, is the science of speaking well. This, he explains, makes it necessary for the speaker himself to be good, "for only a good man can speak well."

Gratifying as is this identification of eloquence with virtue, it seems to be inconclusive. I remember the classical example of Hegesias of Cyrene, who declaimed so effectively on the miseries of life that many of his audience hurried away to commit suicide. It would surely be wrong to call Hegesias virtuous, but I think we must admit his eloquence.

Aristotle's definition, that eloquence is the art of persuasive speech, comes perhaps nearest the truth. If indeed this would include harlots and seducers, we must take comfort in the thought that the Devil is known to quote Scripture for his own ends ; my legal and political experience, moreover, convinces me that the Devil can be very eloquent on occasion.

I should weary my readers if I examined in too great detail the principles upon which the classical orators based their art. Examples will show these more effectively. I may, however, quote an admirable remark of Cicero, the most eloquent of all the Romans. " He is the best speaker," he said, " who by his speaking instructs, delights, and affects the minds of his audience." Let us see how the greatest speakers of those days put this precept into practice.

Pericles, the Athenian, has been famous for his eloquence from his own generation to ours. There is a story of a man who was asked whether he or Pericles was the better wrestler. He replied that he could always throw Pericles to the ground, but the latter would rise, deny that he had fallen, and do this so effectively that even the spectators would believe him. We have unfortunately no first-hand record of Pericles's speeches, but

the words Thucydides, the historian, put into his mouth were probably founded upon constant tradition. If it is asserted that Thucydides, and not Pericles, is their real author, I can only echo the Frenchman who was told that not Voltaire but some anonymous playwright had written *Zaïre*. "So much the better," he said; "we have two geniuses instead of one." There are few finer passages of eloquence than this in Pericles's famous funeral oration over the Athenian dead:

"The whole earth is the sepulchre of famous men; not only are they commemorated by columns and inscriptions in their own country, but in foreign lands there dwells also an unwritten memorial of them, graven not on stone but in the hearts of men."¹

Comparison with this speech is challenged by Lycurgus's eulogy of the Athenians who perished at the disastrous battle of Chæroneia. It ends as follows:

"These men were victorious in death. To brave men the prizes of war are freedom and valour; both of these the dead may possess. . . . Alone of all in Greece these men had freedom in their bodies; for, as they passed from life, all Greece passed into slavery; the freedom of the

¹ Jowett's translation.

rest of the Greeks was buried in the same tombs with their bodies. . . . Their souls are the garland on the brows of their country.”¹

The same defeat, which set Greece at the feet of the Macedonians, was the occasion for one of the finest images of ancient eloquence. Hyperides was impeached for having proposed an illegal measure. He replied, “The arms of Macedon made it too dark to see the laws; not I but the battle of Chæroneia proposed that decree.”

The most consistently eloquent of the Greek orators were Isocrates and Demosthenes. An ancient critic drew an apt comparison between them. When he read Isocrates, he said, he became sober and serious, as if he were listening to solemn music, but when he took up a speech of Demosthenes he was moved by one passion after another: suspicion, distress, fear, contempt, hate, pity, kindness, anger, and envy—all the emotions that can obtain a mastery of the human mind. Isocrates never spoke in public; his speeches were written for others to deliver or to read. He was, indeed, the first great political journalist; his opposite number might well have been Mr. Garvin. Demosthenes, however, essayed the bigger task of swaying an audience; his

¹ Dobson's translation, slightly modified.

greatest eloquence was expended in appeals to his countrymen to take arms against the Macedonian invaders :

“ As long as the vessel is safe, whether it be great or small, the mariner, the pilot, every man in turn, should exert himself and prevent its being overturned either by accident or design : but when the sea has rolled over it, their efforts are vain. . . . Though all other people consent to be slaves, we at least ought to struggle for freedom. When we have completed our own preparations and made them apparent to the Greeks, then let us invite the rest. . . .

“ If you imagine that other States will save Greece, while you run away from the contest, you imagine wrong. Well for any of them, if they are safe themselves. This work belongs to you : this privilege your ancestors bequeathed to you, the prize of many perilous exertions. But if every man sits seeking his pleasure and studying to be idle himself, never will he find others to do his work.”

We miss in this, of course, the verbal glory of the original ; no translation could render it. But in the following passage, where Demosthenes introduces the names of battles famous in Athenian history, we may catch a faint echo of his words :

“ Never, never can you have done wrong, O Athenians, in undertaking battle for the freedom and safety of all ! I swear it by your forefathers

—those who met the peril at Marathon, those who took the field at Plataea, those in the sea-fight at Salamis, and those at Artemisium, and many other brave men.”¹

Of all the Roman orators, Cicero approached most nearly to the eloquence of his beloved Greeks. The Roman spirit is nearer to our own, its vocabulary more akin to ours. When we read the famous opening to his first oration against Catiline, its thunder breaks upon us almost as it did upon the anxious senators who heard it :

“How far wilt thou, O Catiline, abuse our patience? How long shall thy madness outbrave our justice? To what extremities art thou resolved to push thy unbridled insolence of guilt? Canst thou behold the nocturnal arms that watch the Palatine, the guards of the city, the consternation of the citizens, all the wise and worthy crowding for consultation, this impregnable situation, and the reproachful looks of the Roman fathers—canst thou, I say, behold all this and yet remain undaunted and unabashed?”²

The effect of this oration was to drive Catiline out of Rome, but Cicero held to the attack :

“He has gone, he has vanished, he has escaped, he has sailed forth. No longer now shall that

¹ Kennedy's translation, slightly modified.

² Guthrie's translation.

prodigy, that monster of men, scheme the ruin of the city, while she harbours him in her bosom. . . .

“ I hold in utter contempt his army, composed of aged despair, of clownish debauchery, and rustic intemperance ; of men who rather chose to fly from their bail than from their army, of fellows so unfit to stand the look of an enemy that they would tremble should one show them the writ of a magistrate.”

There are, I believe, people who suppose that classical oratory consisted of solemn verbosity interspersed with such “ purple patches ” as I have quoted. But in fact the old speakers appealed to their audience’s sense of humour as readily as do those of our own day. There are few more amusing passages than that in which Cicero, to teach his opponent modesty, relates how he himself was once humiliated. He had been quæstor of the Lilybæum district of Sicily, and imagined his work there was the common talk of all his countrymen.

“ It happened that on my way back I arrived at Puteoli, just at the season when the place was thronged with fashionable people ; and I nearly swooned when someone asked me on what day I had left *Rome*, and whether there was any news. When I replied that I was on my way back from

my province, he said, ' Why, of course, you come from *Africa*, don't you ? '

" ' No,' I answered somewhat coolly, for I was now in high dudgeon. ' I come from Sicily.' Thereupon another of the party interposed with an omniscient air, ' What, don't you know that your friend has been quæstor at *Syracuse* ? ' To cut my story short, I dropped the dudgeon, and made myself just one of those who had come for the waters."¹

Punning was another means by which classical authors introduced light relief into their discourses ; but I shall not try to render any of their efforts into English. Among the Greeks the most scandalous imputations against opponents and their forbears were a usual means of brightening a speech. We find Demosthenes, for example, in one of his most earnest orations, inveighing against his opponent in this fashion :

" I am at no loss for materials concerning you and your family, but am in doubt which to mention first—whether how your father was a servant who kept a reading-school and wore a weight of fetters and a thieves' collar round his neck ; or how your mother reared up you, you beautiful statue, you fine third-rate actor ; or how Phormio, the galley-piper, the slave, took her away."

¹ Watts's translation.

“ I am ashamed to mention the name of my adversary,” remarked Andocides pleasantly in one of his speeches ; “ his father is a branded slave and still works in the Public Mint ; he himself is a foreigner, a barbarian, and a lamp-maker ! ”

The neatest example of true humour, however, in the old orators is, in my opinion, the reply of Hyperides, defending a lady whose accuser had minutely described the torments of the hell that was awaiting her. “ How is my client to blame,” asked Hyperides, “ for the fact that a stone hangs over the head of Tantalus ? ” I see in imagination the stern faces of the Athenian judges breaking into smiles and hear the sound of their laughter, amidst which the solemn pleading and prophetic threats of the prosecution are dissipated and utterly forgotten.

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Since the ancients laid down their rules of eloquence, the invention of printing has raised a new problem. May the title of eloquence be given to what is written as well as to what is spoken ? May a book or an article be called eloquent in the same sense that a speech is ? The problem is really much older, for many of the most eloquent passages in ancient orations have

come down to us, not in the form in which they were originally delivered, but as their author afterwards decided, in the leisurely reflection of his study, that they should have been spoken. It is, for example, on record that Cicero's veiled defiance of Pompey, when the senate was packed with troops for the trial of Milo, was written, or at least made public, after the event. On the occasion itself Cicero was very nervous and broke down ignominiously.

A more modern instance of a similar kind is the elder Pitt's reply to Walpole in the House of Commons, when the latter taunted him with his youth. We all know it as follows :

“ The atrocious crime of being a young man, which the honourable gentleman has with such spirit and decency charged upon me, I shall neither attempt to palliate nor deny, but content myself with wishing that I may be one of those whose folly may cease with their youth, and not of that number who are ignorant in spite of experience.

“ Whether youth can be imputed to any man as a reproach, I will not assume the province of determining : but surely age may become justly contemptible, if the opportunities which it brings have passed away without improvement and vice appears to have prevailed when the passions have subsided. The wretch who, after having seen the

consequences of a thousand errors, continues still to blunder, and whose age has only added obstinacy to stupidity, is surely the object of abhorrence or contempt, and deserves not that his grey head should preserve him from insults."

This fine passage is part of Dr. Johnson's "report" of Pitt's speech; the style of the lexicographer shines through every sentence. Another contemporary, however, has left on record that what really happened was that "Mr. Pitt got up with great warmth, beginning with these words: 'With the greatest reverence to the grey hairs of the honourable gentleman!' Mr. Walpole pulled off his wig, and showed his head covered with grey hairs: which occasioned a general laughter in which Mr. Pitt joined and all warmth immediately subsided."

It is clear, therefore, that Johnson's report is more eloquent than the speech actually spoken. On the other hand, it would be absurd to call every brilliantly written passage eloquent; and in this survey I shall restrict the term either to words actually spoken or to such examples of writing as, like Johnson's invention just quoted, are really speech crystallised and cannot be read by the eye without the involuntary participation of the tongue.

With such a passage, indeed, I must commence my observations on what may be called the classical British period of oratory ; our national poet is my subject. For Shakespeare, master as he was of law, of seamanship, of a hundred other branches of life and learning, was no less master of the art of advocacy. This is admirably demonstrated by Mark Antony's speech over the body of Julius Cæsar. Antony, as my readers know, addresses the populace after Brutus, who has set out the grounds for Cæsar's assassination. Brutus's oration is uninspired : " Believe me for mine honour, and have respect for mine honour, that you may believe." He asks rhetorical questions of a type beloved by every stump orator. " Who is here so base that would be a bondman ? . . . Who is here so vile that will not love his country ? If any, speak ; for him have I offended. I pause for a reply."

Antony now ascends the pulpit. " 'Twere best he speak no harm of Brutus here," murmurs the crowd ; " this Cæsar was a tyrant." Cunningly he repeats the conspirators' charge of ambition against the dead man and batters down their case with three shrewd strokes, ramming home each point with a thrust—" Did this in Cæsar

seem ambitious ? ” . . . “ Ambition should be made of sterner stuff. . . . ” “ Was this ambition ? ” Meanwhile he plays on the secret of Cæsar’s will, known to himself alone ; the appeal to curiosity is insistent :

“ Let but the commons hear this testament—which, pardon me, I do not mean to read. . . . Have patience, gentle friends, I must not read it. . . . ’Tis good you know not that you are his heirs. . . . I have o’ershot myself to tell you of it. . . . You will compel me then to read the will ? . . . You have forgot the will I told you of ! ”

When the mob at last rushes away to fire the conspirators’ houses, Antony, left alone, admires, as we must too, the effect of his eloquence : “ Now let it work. Mischief, thou art afoot ! ”

Cromwell comes next, chronologically, for consideration, and here, as with the elder Pitt, we are forced to rely on somewhat dubious records. He was, however, eloquent only in fragments, and need not detain us long. Some few phrases are immortal, as, for instance, his famous appeal to the Scottish Presbyterians : “ I beseech you, by the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken,” and a passage from his speech to Parliament in 1658 :

“ I can say in the presence of God, in comparison with whom we are but like poor creeping ants upon the earth, I would have been glad to have lived under my woodside, to have kept a flock of sheep—rather than undertake such a parliament as this.”

But in general Cromwell’s rhetoric, though fervid, was too ponderous to rise to the heights of eloquence.

It is with the elder Pitt that we enter upon the great period of British oratory. I have already quoted a fine passage he did not utter, but the following sarcasms at the expense of the Hanoverian troops have rather better warrant of authenticity :

“ The troops of Hanover, whom we are now expected to pay, marched into the low countries, where they still remain. They marched to the place most distant from the enemy, least in danger of an attack, and most strongly fortified, had an attack been designed. They have, therefore, no other claim to be paid, than that they left their own country for a place of greater security. . . . I shall not, therefore, be surprised if, after such another glorious campaign, the opponents of the ministry be challenged to propose better men and be told that the money of this nation cannot be more properly employed than in hiring Hanoverians to eat and sleep.”

For a specimen of the grand manner of the elder Pitt, his well-known denunciation of the use of Indian levies against the American colonists must be quoted :

“ My lords, who is the man that, in addition to those disgraces and mischiefs of our army, has dared to authorise and associate to our arms the tomahawk and scalping-knife of the savage ? To call into civilised alliance the wild and inhuman savage of the woods ; to delegate to the merciless Indian the defence of disputed rights ; and to wage the horrors of his barbarous war against our brethren ? . . . Besides these murderers and plunderers, let me ask our ministers—what other allies have they acquired ? What other powers have they associated to their cause ? Have they entered into alliance with the king of the gipsies ? Nothing, my lords, is too low or too ludicrous to be consistent with their counsels.”

We cannot be sure that Pitt actually said these words, and we know that on occasion he could fail utterly. It is on record that, speaking twice in one evening in the House of Lords, he remarked of his first speech, “ In no house, I hope, have I ever so disgraced myself,” and of his second, “ I think I have now redeemed my credit.” But we know that his eloquence astonished and even terrorised his audience.

The story is told of his sitting in the gallery of the Commons when an election petition was being tried. Hearing a member laugh at some revelation of electoral corruption, he descended to the floor and made an impassioned demand for dignity and honour in public life. "This thunder-bolt," said one who was present, "thrown in a sky so long serene, confounded the audience"; his first two sentences "brought the House to a silence and attention that you might have heard a pin drop."

Pitt's most famous passage is, fortunately, well authenticated. He was speaking of the hostile combination of the Duke of Newcastle and Fox, and said :

"I, who am at a distance from that sanctum sanctorum, whither the priest goes for inspiration, I who travel through a desert and am overwhelmed with mountains of obscurity, cannot so easily catch a gleam to direct me to the beauties of these negotiations—but there are parts of this that do not seem to come from the same quarter with the rest—I cannot unravel this mystery."

Then he clapped his hand suddenly to his forehead, and continued :

"Yes, I too am inspired now ! It strikes me ! I remember to have been carried to see the con-

flux of the Rhone and the Saone ; the one a gentle, feeble, languid stream, and, though languid, of no depth ; the other, a boisterous and impetuous torrent ; but, different as they are, they meet at last."

Macaulay, quoting this image in his essay on Pitt, ignores the spontaneity of its utterance, and thus fails to do justice to its effectiveness.

With Edmund Burke we are well afloat on the stream of British eloquence. No words in all our Parliamentary history are better known than these, in his speech on Conciliation with the Colonies :

" The question with me is, not whether you have a right to render your people miserable, but whether it is not your interest to make them happy. It is not what a lawyer tells me I may do, but what humanity, reason, and justice tell me I ought to do. Is a politic act the worse for being a generous one ? Is no concession proper but that which is made from your want of right to keep what you grant ? Or does it lessen the grace or dignity of relaxing in the exercise of an odious claim, because you have your evidence-room full of titles, and your magazines stuffed with arms to enforce them ? What signify all those titles and all those arms ? Of what avail are they when the reason of the thing tells me that the assertion of my title is the loss of my suit, and

that I could do nothing but wound myself by the use of my own weapons ? ”

It seems incredible that the House should have emptied as Burke delivered this, the greatest of all his speeches, and that it was only when men read it that they came to admire it. Our attitude nowadays approximates much more to that of his enthusiastic supporter, who, having heard Burke speak, cried, “ I say ditto to Mr. Burke ! ” There are other passages in the same oration of a purer eloquence than that quoted above ; for example, the two passages on liberty :

“ The temper and character which prevail in our colonies are, I am afraid, unalterable by any human art. We cannot, I fear, falsify the pedigree of this fierce people, and persuade them that they are not sprung from a nation in whose veins the blood of freedom circulates. The language in which they would hear you tell them this tale would detect the imposition. Your speech would betray you. An Englishman is the unfittest person on earth to argue another Englishman into slavery.”

And :

“ As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority in this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to

our common faith, wherever the chosen race and sons of England worship Freedom, they will turn their faces towards you. The more they multiply, the more friends you will have. The more ardently they love liberty, the more perfect will be their obedience. Slavery they can have anywhere. It is a weed that grows in every soil. They may have it from Spain ; they may have it from Prussia ; but, until you become lost to all feeling of your true interest and your natural dignity, freedom they can have from none but you. This is the commodity of price, of which you have the monopoly."

Another speech of Burke's which astounds us by its eloquence but which, when delivered, was considered by his political opponents undeserving of notice and reply, is his address on the Nabob of Arcot's debts, which first showed Burke's interest in Indian affairs. It contains the famous description of the havoc wrought by Hyder Ali in the Carnatic :

" Then ensued a scene of woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no art conceived. All the horrors of war before known or heard of, were mercy to that new havoc. A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants, flying from their flaming villages, in part were slaughtered ; others without regard to sex,

to age, to the respect of rank, or sacredness of function, fathers torn from children, husbands from wives, enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry, and amidst the goading spears of drivers and the trampling of pursuing horses, were swept into captivity in an unknown and hostile land. Those who were able to evade this tempest, fled to the walled cities. But escaping from fire, sword, and exile, they fell into the jaws of famine."

This speech prefaced Burke's terrific attack three years later upon Warren Hastings, for whose impeachment he more than any other man was responsible. Where so much might be quoted, I will reproduce only the solemn words with which Burke concluded his great speech :

" I impeach Warren Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanours.

" I impeach him in the name of the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled, whose parliamentary trust he has betrayed.

" I impeach him in the name of all the Commons of Great Britain, whose national character he has dishonoured.

" I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose laws, rights, and liberties he has subverted ; whose properties he has destroyed, whose country he has laid waste and desolate.

" I impeach him in the name and by virtue of those eternal laws of justice which he has violated.

“ I impeach him in the name of human nature itself, which he has cruelly outraged, injured, and oppressed in both sexes, in every age, rank, situation, and condition of life.”

The effect of this speech at least was immediate. Macaulay tells us that “ handkerchiefs were pulled out, smelling-bottles were handed about, hysterical sobs and screams were heard, and Mrs. Sheridan was carried out in a fit.” And Warren Hastings himself said, as Burke sat down, “ I thought myself for the moment the guiltiest man in England.”

My brief survey of the great age of British oratory brings me now to the younger Pitt. Fox said of him, that whereas he himself could always find a word, Pitt always found *the* word. This does not mean, I imagine, that Pitt always chose the most beautiful or most striking expression, but that he could always frame in admirable and formal English an argument to turn his audience to his opinion. For, in fact, the younger Pitt was not a very attractive speaker ; his orations were business-like rather than eloquent. As a debater, however, he had no equal. This was recognised from the outset of his career. There is a well-known anecdote of his being introduced as a youth to the steps of the Speaker’s chair in the

Commons by Fox, the then undisputed master of debate. As the young man listened to the arguments directed against the Government, he whispered to Fox, "But surely, Mr. Fox, that might be met thus," suggesting replies that moved his companion to admiration. It is no wonder that Burke, hearing Pitt's first speech, compared him with Chatham, his father, and said: "It is not a chip of the old block; it is the old block itself."

I find little in Pitt's recorded speeches to reproduce here, though I cannot pass over that brilliant impromptu with which he concluded his famous speech in support of the abolition of the slave trade. "We may hope," he was saying to a House that had sat late through the night, "that even Africa, though last of all the quarters of the globe, shall enjoy at length, in the evening of her days, those blessings which have descended so plentifully upon us in a much earlier period of the world." At that moment the first rays of dawn shone through the windows of the chamber, and Pitt burst into a sonorous Virgilian quotation:

*"Nosque ubi primus equis Oriens afflavit anhelis;
Illic sera rubens accendit lumina Vesper,"*

which hexameters I may translate thus:

“Where first the Dawn inspires us with its panting steeds, there the Evening-Star kindles its tardy torches.”

This is, I think, the aptest classical quotation that ever was made in our Parliament, where formerly such references were frequent, although now they have almost wholly disappeared.

I come now to Charles James Fox, the greatest Opposition speaker our country has known. I must confess that many times, in the political disputes of to-day, I have wished that Socialist speakers would study his speeches to the improvement of their own. They, who so often over-stress the superficial likeness of the French Revolution with the Russian upheaval of our own time, should surely not ignore Fox's magnificent pleas for the French. Their arguments for the Russians would, I agree, be no more weighty than hitherto, but at least the tone of their utterances would rise above the appeal to envy and selfishness in which they usually are clothed to-day. I make them a present of a quotation from Fox's oration on Peace with France :

“No man regrets more than I do the enormities that France has committed ; but how do they

bear upon the question as it now stands? Are we for ever to deprive ourselves of the benefits of peace, because France has perpetrated acts of injustice? We cannot acquit ourselves upon such ground. We have negotiated. With the knowledge of these acts of injustice and disorder, we have treated with them twice; yet the right honourable gentleman cannot enter into negotiations with them now; and it is worth while to attend to the reasons that he gives for refusing their offer. The Revolution itself is no more an objection now than it was in 1796, when he did negotiate; for the Government of France at that time was surely as unstable as it is now. The crimes of the French, the instability of their Government, did not then prevent him; and why are they to prevent him now?"

Here is another fragment of the same speech:

"As to the restoration of the House of Bourbon, if it shall be the wish of the people of France, I for one shall be perfectly content to acquiesce. I think the people of France, as well as every other people, ought to have the government they like best themselves; and the form of that government, or the persons who hold it in their hands, should never be an obstacle with me to treat with a nation for peace, or to live with them in amity; but as an Englishman, and actuated by English feelings, I surely cannot wish for the restoration of the House of Bourbon to the throne of France. I hope I am not a man to bear

heavily upon any unfortunate family. I feel for their situation—I respect their distresses—but as a friend of England, I cannot wish for their restoration to the power which they abused. I cannot forget that the whole history of the century is little more than an account of the wars and the calamities arising from the restless ambition, the intrigues, and the perfidy of the House of Bourbon.”

It was in the same cause of peace with France that Fox uttered his eulogy of Washington and the American nation, in words that have a significance even now, a hundred and thirty years after their utterance :

“Happy Americans ! While the whirlwind spreads desolation over one quarter of the globe, you remain protected from its baneful effects, by your own virtues and the wisdom of your Government. Separated from Europe by an immense ocean, you feel not the effects of those prejudices and passions, which convert the boasted seats of civilisation into scenes of horror and bloodshed. You profit by the folly and madness of contending nations, and afford in your more congenial clime an asylum to those blessings and virtues which they wantonly condemn, or wickedly exclude from their bosom. Cultivating the arts of peace under the influence of freedom, you advance by rapid strides to opulence and distinction ; and if by any accident you should

be compelled to take part in the present unhappy contest, if you should find it necessary to avenge insult, or repel injury, the world will bear witness to the equity of your sentiments and the moderation of your views, and the success of your arms will, no doubt, be proportioned to the justice of your cause."

I have already quoted from Burke's magnificent impeachment of Warren Hastings, but the speech which most powerfully presented the case against the Indian governor-general was delivered by Richard Brinsley Sheridan, playwright and orator. His words, we are told, were poorly reported, but there is no doubt of the effect they produced. A convinced supporter of Hastings went to the House to hear Sheridan speak. At the end of the first hour he said to a friend, "All this is declamatory assertion without proof"; an hour later, "This is a most wonderful oration"; an hour later still, "Mr. Hastings has acted most unjustifiably"; then, "Mr. Hastings is a most atrocious criminal"; and finally at the end of the fifth hour, "Of all the monsters of iniquity, the most enormous is Warren Hastings."

Burke and Pitt declared that Sheridan's oration against Warren Hastings was the most eloquent of which there was record; Fox said that "all

he had ever heard, all that he had ever read, when compared with it, dwindled into nothing, and vanished like vapour before the sun."

The fragments of this great effort that have come down to us are so unworthy of the original that I shall not quote from them, but I may be permitted to offer a few sentences from Sheridan's speech delivered four months later at the trial :

"My lords, I have closed the evidence. I have no further comments. What I have done with the evidence I have done with everything that is near my heart. It is by the majesty, by the form of that justice that I do conjure and implore your lordships to give your minds to this great business. . . . We know the result must be inevitable. Let the truth appear, and our cause is gained. It is to this I conjure your lordships, for your own honour, for the honour of the nation, for the honour of human nature now entrusted to your care, that I, for the Commons of England speaking through us, claim this duty at your hands. They exhort you to it by everything that calls sublimely upon the heart of man, by the majesty of that injustice which this bold man has libelled, by the wide fame of your own renowned tribunal, by the sacred pledge by which you swear in the solemn hour of decision, knowing that that decision will bring you the greatest reward that ever blessed the heart of man—the

consciousness of having done the greatest act of mercy for the world that the earth has ever yet received from any hand but by Heaven."

In view of Sheridan's success as an orator it is curious to recall that a friend said to him of his first Parliamentary speech: "You had much better have stuck to your former pursuits," to which the disappointed playwright replied, "It is in me, however, and, by God, it shall come out." It certainly "came out" in the Hastings trial.

Every speaker has tasted the sorrow of finding, when his eloquence is well under way, that his time is coming to an end. With equal discomfort I notice that the space I have allotted myself for a review of the great age of British oratory is already nearly filled, while I have not yet treated of a dozen or more great examples. I must perforce be brief now, and therefore omit any mention of such admirable speakers as Grattan, Windham, Curran, Erskine, Canning, Plunket, Macaulay, Cobden, O'Connell and "Angel of Death" Bright. But if these remarks have at all stimulated interest among my readers in the treasures of British eloquence, my object will have been attained if they turn to the recorded utterances of these men to supply the deficiencies

of this essay. I have space left only for three names—Lincoln, Gladstone, and Disraeli.

Lincoln's Gettysburg address is, I am inclined to think, the most eloquent funeral oration of all time. There is a beauty in its phrasing, a dignity in its sentiments, and, most of all, a marvellous harmony among all its parts that makes it stand out from the other speeches in our language. I am perhaps wrong to quote it, for it must be familiar in its entirety to so many who are reading these lines, but yet I cannot bring myself to omit it altogether or to attempt to choose one portion and omit the rest. All who share my admiration for it will not cavil at finding it set out here once more :

“ Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

“ Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fit and proper that we should do this.

“ But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this

ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion, that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

There is nothing in Gladstone's speeches of this quality, but he too could assume the grand manner on occasion. It is difficult to select passages from his orations that are pure jewels of eloquence, for he usually, like the younger Pitt, held himself closely to the matter under discussion and disdained the iteration of general appeals to the sentiments of his audience. At the same time his denunciation of the supineness of the British Government in regard to Turkish outrages has outlived the moment that called it into being. For example :

“ That burden of woe and shame—the greatest that exists on God’s earth—is one that we thought united Europe was about to remove ; that in the Protocol united Europe was pledged to remove ; but to removing which, for the present, you seem to have no efficacious means of offering even the smallest practical contribution. But the removal of that load of woe and shame is a great and noble prize. It is a prize well worth competing for. It is not too late to try to win it. I believe there are men in the Cabinet who would try to win it, if they were free to act on their own beliefs and aspirations.

“ It is not too late, I say, to become competitors for that prize ; but be assured, whether you mean to claim for yourselves even a single leaf in that immortal chaplet of renown, which will be the reward of true labour in that cause, or whether you turn your backs upon that cause and your own duty, I believe for one that the knell of Turkish tyranny in those provinces has sounded. So far as human eye can judge, it is about to be destroyed. The destruction may not come in the way or by the means that we should choose ; but come this boon from what hands it may, it will be a noble boon, and as a noble boon will gladly be accepted by Christendom and the world.”

Everyone is familiar with the episode of Disraeli’s maiden speech in the House of Commons, when he turned on the jeering members and cried :

“ I am not surprised at the reception I have experienced. I have begun several times many things, and I have often succeeded at the last. I will sit down now, but the time will come when you will hear me.” It is only fair to his audience to say that the jeers came chiefly from the Irish members, who even in those days occasionally displayed that ebullience which afterwards became one of their chief claims to Parliamentary fame. Disraeli, when his long period of prominence arrived, was a witty and sardonic speaker. His style is so modern that quotations from it would seem, except for their brilliance, transcripts from the Hansard of to-day. I must content myself, however, with a single reference, which I take from one of his attacks upon Peel, his nominal leader :

“ Whether a Tory Ministry exists or not, I do not pretend to decide : but I am bound to believe that the Tory majority still remains and, therefore, I do not think it is the majority that should cross the House, but only the Ministry. . . . The position of the right honourable gentleman is clear and precise. I do not believe he is looking to any coalition, although many of my constituents do. The right honourable gentleman has only exactly to remain where he is. The right honourable gentleman caught the Whigs bathing,

and walked away with their clothes. He has left them in the full enjoyment of their liberal position, and he is himself a strict conservative of their garments. . . . I look on the right honourable gentleman as a man who has tamed the shrew of Liberalism by her own tactics. He is the political Petruchio, who has outbid you all."

It is no wonder that, after the speech of which the above is a fragment, Peel, in Disraeli's own words, "was stunned and stupefied, lost his head and, vacillating between silence and spleen, spoke much and weakly" in reply.

Gladstone and Disraeli, however, bring us to our own times.

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Many complaints have recently been made by members of the House of Commons of the length of the speeches made by those orators who have been successful in catching the eye of Mr. Speaker in important debates. It is demonstrated, not without bitterness, that in recent Second Reading debates the average duration of the speeches has been an hour, and that so great a lack of consideration has greatly curtailed the period available to less fortunate members. The provocation has indeed revived the movement associated with the name of the late Major Rasch, who carried

on for many years a programme in favour of shorter speeches. An appeal, we are told, has been made to private members, with the result that a considerable majority of the House is pledged to reform in the direction indicated. The movement has its origin in the back benches, but it would be wrong to assume that the grievance is one of the private member against the front bencher. It is a movement of those who are not fortunate enough to catch the eye of Mr. Speaker directed against those who have succeeded in catching his eye.

The greatest offenders are by no means ministers, ex-ministers, or future ministers. It is, of course, true that members of the two front benches are naturally accorded the principal places in debate. They speak when important measures require detailed exposition or detailed criticism ; but when, as occasionally happens, the rejection of a measure is left in the hands of a private member the substitution has not been found to induce economy of debate. The truth is that, under modern conditions, less time is afforded to what are known as full-dress debates ; while far more members are competent and, being competent, desire to take part in them.

It may be true that the great luminaries of the

House of Commons are small in comparison with their predecessors, though even this admission must be qualified by the notorious tendency of mankind to exaggerate the past at the expense of the present ; but whether this be true or not, it is undoubtedly true that a constantly growing number of private members has attained to a degree of debating efficiency which would have astonished as much as it would have inconvenienced those who stage-managed Parliamentary debates in the younger days of Disraeli.

Everyone will admit that brevity, *concinntas* of speech, is one of the great gifts of oratory, more valuable because conceded to so few ; but the admission does not exclude the reflection that most of the greatest speeches which have ever been delivered in the history of oratory have not been brief. The occasion often dictates the quality of the oratory which is addressed to that occasion. Great subjects stimulate great speakers, but great subjects are not usually treated with adequacy within a short compass of time. Many of Cicero's greatest speeches are models of compression, but few of his greatest speeches are short. I should myself contemplate with no small aversion any proposal to limit the length of speeches in the House of Commons. Some of

the best speeches I have ever heard there have lasted an hour. It is true that some of the worst have lasted the same time ; but it is a far smaller misfortune that an empty House should be bored by a long and foolish speech, than that a crowded House should be denied, in the absence of special leave, the opportunity of hearing a long and wise one.

It is clear that a proposal to grant any special privilege to the members of the front benches would be resisted by private members of all parties. Labouchere, Parnell, Gibson Bowles, Harold Cox, and many other ornaments of Parliamentary debate never sat on the front bench at all ; and there will always be in the House of Commons a limited number of men of distinguished parliamentary capacity who from idiosyncrasy, independence, or accident have never sat upon the front bench. To apply a form of closure to such persons in favour of Under-Secretaries and Junior Lords would be as absurd as it would be intolerable. Any discrimination, therefore, between private members and those who sit on the front bench may be rejected ; and I am aware of no other form of discrimination which can be defended by plausible arguments. It has been proposed that special privileges should be con-

ceded to the minister introducing a Bill and to the Opposition spokesman against it, but it is evident that the course of debate may easily produce changes which would make it reasonable and proper that later speakers should receive similar indulgence. The House of Commons is a very generous assembly ; it listens with pleasure to good speeches, however bitter and extreme the standpoint ; but to ask for special indulgence in favour of an able partisan making an extreme and bitter speech might easily impose an excessive strain upon this quality.

Nor do I place much hope in the most recent suggestion that intending speakers should inform Mr. Speaker of the probable length of their speeches. I assume an honest intention, but even with this assumption the security is miserably poor. No man ever says to himself and no man ever believes, when he rises to make a speech, that it will be a very long one ; still less does he believe that it will be a very dull one ; but the mischief which requires correction is that many esteemed persons do, without anticipating their destiny, make speeches which are both very long and very dull. A record of these falsified intentions would merely supply a few stanzas to the vanity of human wishes.

The House of Commons is, after all, not defenceless. If an inopportune prolixity annoys it at an intolerable moment, it can and does end the mischief by the time-honoured admonition " 'Vide, 'vide." If the complaint is not that an unwelcome speech has been interposed after the leaders have spoken, and immediately before a division, but merely that, though delivered at a legitimate moment, the speech is dull and the orator a bore, members are not compelled to stay, and do not stay, in the Chamber. No Government, however vast its majority, would venture to put so great a strain upon the loyalty of its supporters.

The House of Commons always listens with interest, if not always without interruption, to really able speeches; and interruption in a crowded and otherwise silent House is itself one of the greatest compliments that can be paid to a speaker. Members do not interrupt a dull man who is making no impression; they have other weapons—they either leave the Chamber or they talk.

Those who speak with pessimism of our modern orators seem to me somewhat to ignore the tendency, to which I have already referred, of mankind to make heroes of their predecessors.

I am sure that in the early days of Gladstone and Disraeli, old men who could still recall the brilliant contemporaries of Canning drew comparisons entirely in favour of the early generation. It is true that the taste of the House of Commons has undergone a complete change, but I am by no means satisfied that there have not been a certain number of members in the House of Commons in the present century who could have conformed with striking and even brilliant success to the Parliamentary standards of fifty years ago. It is probably safe to predict that no great House of Commons triumph will be attained hereafter, as in the days of Robert Lowe, by Virgilian quotations thrice retorted ; still less will a contention be effectively crystallised in a line of Euripides. Had such methods survived, perhaps the late Mr. Jebb and the late Mr. Butcher would have suggested matter for reflection to the indiscriminating *laudator temporis acti*. The House of Commons has become more business-like, responding with faithful reflection to the general tendency in every department of life and letters. We are less florid than our forefathers were ; we do not write novels in the method of *Rienzi*, nor do we attempt, if we could, perorations of the diffuse eloquence demanded by the heroes of the past.

Yet in cultivation, in natural eloquence, in the subtlety of dialectics, there are probably at least as large a number of speakers in this generation entitled to a high place, as have ever debated in the House of Commons at any period of its history.

Nothing, for instance, would persuade me that there has ever been a time in the history of the House of Commons in which Lord Balfour would not have reached the ascendancy which made him for so many years a unique figure in our Parliamentary debates. Many people can speak better. I have never heard anyone who can think aloud so brilliantly, so spontaneously, and so conclusively. I have heard him rise to speak in vital occasions where it was certain that every word, reported exactly as he uttered it, would be read and re-read by hundreds of thousands, with no notes except such as he had hurriedly scribbled on an envelope during the progress of the debate. Often his speech as delivered has produced a great impression, sometimes an extraordinary impression; but I have never heard Lord Balfour speak without reading his speech with a wonder infinitely greater, for its structure, its logical evolution, and its penetrating subtlety of thought always supply elements

which help him very little at the moment just because it is not possible instantly to appreciate, while listening to him, their amazing excellence. Several people can make better extemporaneous speeches than Lord Balfour in Parliament, judged by their instantaneous impression, and many can make better ones upon the platform, but I have never heard anyone make better extemporaneous speeches than he, and I am certain that I never shall, judged, not by the impression at the moment upon an excited assembly, but by the far more searching criterion of the deliberate judgment of critical men.

Take, for example, a portion of his speech in seconding the address to the King and Queen-Mother on the death of King Edward, in the House of Commons. It is a noble example of Lord Balfour's gift for easy, yet exact, expression :

“ There have been, I think, strange misunderstanding with regard to the relation of the great King who has just departed, to the administration of our public affairs. There are people who suppose that he took upon himself duties commonly left to his servants, and that, when the secrets of diplomacy are revealed to the historian, it will be found that he took a part not known but half suspected in the transactions of his reign. Sir, that is to belittle the King. That is not to pay

him the tribute which in this connection he so greatly and justly deserves.

"We must not think of him as a dexterous diplomatist. He was a great monarch, and it was because he was able naturally, simply through the incommunicable gift of personality, to make all feel—to embody to all men—the friendly policy of this country, that he was able to do the work in the bringing together of nations which has fallen to the lot of few men, be they king or be they subject, to accomplish. He did that which no ministers, no Cabinet, no ambassadors, neither treaties nor protocols nor understandings, which no debates, no banquets, no speeches, were able to perform. He, by his personality alone, brought home to the minds of millions on the Continent, as nothing else we could have done could have brought it home to them, the friendly feelings of the country over which King Edward ruled.

"Sir, he has gone. He has gone in the plenitude of his powers, in the noontide of his popularity, ripe in experience. He is gone, and he will never be absent from the memory, or from the affections of those who were his subjects."

Lord Oxford—whom posterity will certainly recall better as Mr. Asquith—also possesses extraordinary Parliamentary gifts. His methods, I am well aware, might very persuasively be cited in disproof of the protest already made against correction of prolixity in debate. He seldom

speaks for more than forty minutes—often, and on important occasions, for only half an hour—but it is given to few to bend the bow of Odysseus. He can confine his remarks within reasonable compass simply because he possesses the gift of never saying a word too much ; he always has at his command not merely the appropriate but the inevitable word ; and it is therefore never necessary for him to use two words when one would express his meaning. Whether he has prepared his speech or whether he is speaking extempore, the one word is swiftly available. He produces, wherever and whenever he wants them, an endless succession of perfectly coined sentences conceived with unmatched felicity, and delivered without hesitation in a parliamentary style which is at once the envy and the despair of imitators. He never perhaps takes a point very subtle, very recondite, very obviously out of the reach of the ordinary member of Parliament. He lacks Lord Balfour's chief fascination—that of never taking part in the discussion of a great subject without illuminating it by rays of penetrating analysis wholly novel, wholly unattainable to the average member, and yet immediately compelling attention and assent. But, on the other hand, he realised completely the merit

of saying better in the House of Commons than anyone else in it what all his party were thinking, and of giving to their thoughts a felicitous and cogent expression of which they were incapable.

His Guildhall speech on November 9, 1914, however, transcended party and set out once and for all the objects for which this country had entered the War, and its closing passage was destined to be remembered throughout the long years that lay ahead :

“ We shall never sheathe the sword which we have not lightly drawn until Belgium recovers in full measure all and more than all that she has sacrificed ; until France is adequately secured against the menace of aggression ; until the rights of the smaller nationalities of Europe are placed upon an unassailable foundation ; and until the military domination of Prussia is wholly and finally destroyed. That is a great task, worthy of a great nation. It needs for its accomplishment that every man among us, old or young, rich or poor, busy or leisurely, learned or simple, should give what he has and do what he can.”

Burke never uttered a nobler appeal.

Bonar Law employed methods of preparation which were, so far as I know, unique. In his most carefully prepared speeches he made no

notes, but formulated in his mind the sequence of his argument in the very words in which it was to be expressed ; and then by a series of mental rehearsals he made himself as much master of the whole speech as if he read it from a manuscript on the table. It might have been supposed that such a method of preparation would have imposed an almost intolerable mental strain, but it appeared to cause Bonar Law neither trouble nor anxiety. Later events conclusively showed that he could make extremely successful speeches on occasions also on which no preparation was possible. Whether he was making a carefully prepared or an extemporary speech he used no notes whatever, and in neither case did he ever transgress in the slightest degree the exact proportional treatment which the immediate subject required.

His style as a speaker was peculiar to himself : he was simple, perspicuous, and extremely cogent. Very few Latin words overloaded his sentences ; indeed, his style and diction resembled those of Bright more closely than of any parliamentary speaker who reached a great position in the interval between them. He possessed a pungency and a degree of combative brilliancy which made the closing speeches of many a fierce party

debate a scene of unmixed triumph to his delighted supporters. But his oratory does not lend itself to piecemeal quotations.

Mr. Lloyd George is undoubtedly a speaker of extraordinary variety, *flair*, and plausibility. He has three wholly distinct styles of speech. The first is that of Limehouse ; the second that of the House of Commons in an excited party debate ; the third that of the House of Commons when he was concerned in forwarding business and conciliating criticism. His cleverness and address in the third method are beyond all praise. He thanks his opponents for their assistance, he compliments them upon their public spirit, he accepts their co-operation with gratitude, and the whole proceeding is conducted with an ingratiating bonhomie which, at its best, is extraordinarily clever, if, at its worst, it recalls the emollient properties of highly scented soap. His second style, that employed in the combative party speech in a full-dress debate, does not impress me equally. He is, indeed, a very adroit controversialist on these occasions, but the methods employed are a little crude. His speeches are wholly lacking in that literary quality which marks all the best House of Commons oratory, and when he trusts, as he sometimes does, to the

eloquence of the moment, it is usually more that of the platform or pulpit than of the House of Commons.

He is beyond question a very powerful controversialist, but his special merits are to be found rather in his first or third styles than his second. I have never heard him speak on the platform to a great party audience, but I should imagine that amid these surroundings he is head and shoulders above any contemporary speaker. He is in fact an unmatched demagogue; but it is only fair to add that he is a demagogue not by affectation or from policy, but because he is the sincere mouthpiece of his antecedents and his temperament. His speeches at Limehouse and Newcastle were open to the gravest criticism both on the ground of taste and in relation to their accuracy, but each of them was a formidable dynamic fact.

A passage from the Newcastle speech will show Mr. Lloyd George at his most effective :

“ What is the chief charge against the Budget by its opponents ? That it is an attack against industry and an attack on property. I am going to demonstrate to you that it is neither, . . . Only one stock has gone badly—there has been a great slump in dukes. They used to stand rather

high in the market, especially in the Tory market, but the Tory Press has discovered that they are of no value. They have been making speeches recently. One especially expensive duke made a speech, and all the Tory Press said: 'Well now, really, is that the sort of thing we are spending £250,000 a year upon?'—because a fully equipped duke costs as much to keep up as two Dreadnoughts; and dukes are just as great a terror and they last longer. As long as they were contented to be mere idols on their pedestals, preserving that stately silence which became their rank and their intelligence, all went well, and the average British citizen rather looked up to them and said to himself, 'Well, if the worst came to the worst for this old country, we have always the dukes to fall back on.' But then came the Budget, they stepped off their perch, they have been scolding like omnibus-drivers, purely because the Budget cart has knocked a little of the gilt off their old stage-coach. Well, we cannot put them back again. That is the only property that has gone down badly in the market; all the rest has improved."

But it would be cynically unjust to Mr. Lloyd George to omit a quotation from one of his more serious speeches in the War, which by his energy and moral courage he did so much to win.

What follows is from his speech at the Queen's Hall on September 19, 1914:

“ May I tell you in a simple parable what I think this war is doing for us ? I know a valley in North Wales, between the mountains and the sea. It is a beautiful valley, snug, comfortable, sheltered by the mountains from all the bitter blasts. But it is very enervating, and I remember how the boys were in the habit of climbing the hill above the village to have a glimpse of the great mountains in the distance, and to be stimulated and freshened by the breezes which came from the hilltops, and by the spectacle of their grandeur.

“ We have been living in a sheltered valley for generations. We have been too comfortable and too indulgent, many, perhaps, too selfish, and the stern hand of fate has scourged us to an elevation where we can see the everlasting things that matter for a nation—the great peaks we had forgotten of Honour, Duty, Patriotism, and, clad in glittering white, the towering pinnacle of Sacrifice pointing like a rugged finger to heaven. We shall descend into the valleys again ; but as long as the men and women of this generation last, they will carry in their hearts the image of those mighty peaks whose foundations are not shaken, though Europe rock and sway in the convulsions of a great war.”

Mr. Winston Churchill is a speaker of a wholly different type. He could not, of course, have made so great a reputation as a speaker without extraordinary ability, but equally I think he

could not have done so if his perseverance and tenacity had been less dogged ; for he hardly belongs to the class of orators who are sometimes called “ natural.” He bestows upon his important speeches a degree of almost meticulous preparation ; he elaborates and sometimes over-elaborates. In old days an excessive dependence upon his manuscript a little impaired the parliamentary success of some of his most important speeches, but his hearers enjoy the compensating qualities of these defects. His speeches are marked by an arresting literary quality. Some of his phrases are scarcely less happy than those of Disraeli ; and nearly all his carefully considered speeches bear the impress of deep and fruitful thought. He is more instinct with the House of Commons spirit than any of the new generation. He has brooded deeply upon the records of parliamentary oratory, has analysed with inexhaustible patience the temperament of the House of Commons, and will perhaps recall to a generation which has almost forgotten them the parliamentary standards and modes of expression amid which Mr. Gladstone, Sir William Harcourt and Lord Chaplin served their apprenticeship.

There are many passages that I might choose

to illustrate Mr. Churchill's eloquence, for he is a speaker of infinite variety. I select two as typical, one of them delivered early, the other later, in his career. First, then, the peroration of one of his speeches at Dundee in 1908 :

“Cologne Cathedral took six hundred years to build. Generations of architects and builders lived and died while the work was in progress. Still the work went on. Sometimes a generation built wrongly, and the next generation had to unbuild, and the next generation had to build again. Still the work went on through all the centuries, till at last there stood forth to the world a mighty monument of beauty and of truth to command the admiration and inspire the reverence of mankind. So let it be with the British Commonwealth. Let us build wisely, let us build surely, let us build faithfully, let us build not for the moment, but for future years, seeking to establish here below what we hope to find above—a house of many mansions, where there shall be room for all.”

Next I take a portion of the last speech he delivered in the House of Commons in 1915, when he left the Cabinet to go into the trenches of Flanders ;

“We are the Reserve of the Allied cause, and the time has come when the Reserve must be thrown

fully into the scale . . . It is vital to us, as a matter of honour and sacred duty, to increase and maintain the numbers of our Armies in the Field, and to render this possible the best economic organisation and the most unsparing thrift must be applied at home. It is no doubt disconcerting for us to observe the Government of a State like Bulgaria convinced, on an impartial survey of the chances, that victory will rest with the Central Powers. Some of these small States are hypnotised by German military pomp and precision. They see the glitter, they see the episode ; but what they do not see or realise is the capacity of the ancient and mighty nations, against whom Germany is warring, to endure adversity, to put up with disappointment and mismanagement, to recreate and renew their strength, to toil on with boundless obstinacy through boundless suffering to the achievement of the greatest cause for which men have ever fought."

Seven-and-twenty years ago Mr. Winston Churchill and Lord Hugh Cecil first became intimates, confederates, and in a sense rivals. Lord Hugh was then a far more spontaneous speaker than Mr. Churchill, and he has other qualities which, so far as I know, no one in the House of Commons but himself possesses. He unites to the most tenacious combativeness an idealism of view which even those who are most affronted by his controversial bitterness admit

in their hearts. Indeed, nothing is more striking than to observe how the opposite benches, almost unable to control their disagreeable anticipations when Lord Hugh rises to speak, are compelled in spite of themselves to listen and often even to sympathise with an outlook upon affairs which has so little in common with their own.

I am told, for I was not present myself, that Lord Hugh's speech on the Education Act of 1904 was the most effective he ever made. Despite the embittered controversy that raged upon the subject, it held the six hundred members of the House in absolute silence to the end. And Lord Hugh was a young man of thirty-four. It does not read as well as it sounded, but the peroration has the marks of true eloquence :

“No one desires to use the national schools of the country to convert children from one religion to another. All I desire is to make each child as good a Christian of his father's denomination as is possible. I agree that the springs of human conviction lie beyond the schools to a great extent ; but still in the schools much good might be done for Christianity. Even if they could influence one child in that direction, it is worth doing. The enemy outside is more to be dreaded than the opponent within. The differences which divide the extreme Nonconformist

from the extreme Roman Catholic are trivial compared with the differences which separate the Christian from the non-Christian. I ask you to approach the question of education from this point of view, and to make the schools of the country the citadel of Christianity.’’

In many ways I consider Mr. Horatio Bottomley to be one of the most attractive speakers to whom I have ever listened. He certainly attained to a higher degree of excellence in three quite distinct types of speech than any speaker known to me. His House of Commons style was almost ideal. Self-possessed, quiet, irresistibly witty, and distinguished equally by common sense and tolerance, he made for himself an outstanding position in the House of Commons. I am assured by good judges that he was, if possible, even more effective when addressing a great audience of many thousands, and as a forensic speaker I can say with experience that his force, his persuasiveness, and the perfection of his form were unrivalled. Many men can speak well in the Law Courts who speak well nowhere else ; some can speak well in the Law Courts and in the House of Commons ; some, again, in the Law Courts and on the platform. I have never met anyone who reached so high a degree of excellence in all

three methods of speech. He united to a brilliant native humour a broad range of treatment, nerves of steel, an original outlook upon affairs, and an exact grasp of detail which hardly ever accompanies the other qualities.

The best speech he ever made was, in my opinion, his address to the Bradlaugh Fellowship, from which I quote the following :

“ To-night we mourn him ; and though many of you, most of you, are resigned to the belief that he is dead and gone for ever and for ever, still, even you, and all of us, may surely take this comfort to our hearts, that, if it should some day prove to be the fact that the almost universal instinct of mankind is right, and that somewhere beyond what we call death, there be another life, a life where the great and the good receive their reward—then, if in that world there count for righteousness, true nobility of character on earth, inviolability of honesty, purity of purpose, and inflexibility of courage, there, amongst the highest and most honoured amongst the noblest, will be found the majestic soul of brave Charles Bradlaugh.”

The tragedy of Mr. Bottomley's later career must not allow us to forget that he was a man of infinite wit, infinite variety, and one capable at times of a vein of very elevated eloquence.

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The present Prime Minister, Mr. Stanley Baldwin, is an orator of a very different type. He affects to despise rhetoric, and has publicly disparaged and, as I think, defamed it as "the harlot of the arts." I suspect here an affectation of which Mr. Baldwin himself may quite possibly be unconscious.

Rhetoric, after all, means only the art of using language so as to persuade or influence others. Unless, therefore, it is an unworthy thing to attempt to persuade or convince others, rhetoric cannot without absurdity be dismissed as in itself an unworthy art. And it is, of course, quite evident that the noblest purposes of human life may be attained by persuasion. To disparage rhetoric, therefore, is to throw contempt upon the beautiful, sometimes the almost inspired, instrument by which alone the highest of human aspirations may win to the goal of achievement. And, indeed, Mr. Baldwin's attitude, half playful as I believe it to be, will be found to involve him in the strangest of paradoxes and confusions. Mussolini can no doubt afford—precisely as the Roman Emperors could—to laugh at orators and decry their art.

Mr. Baldwin cannot. For both he himself and the party of which he is the conscientious

and most worthy trustee can only hope to survive politically in as far as they are successful in persuading the people of this country that their salvation lies in the maintenance of a high national and historic tradition, and not in the prairie-fire bitterness of class hatred. Mr. Baldwin has himself made in the House of Commons more than one speech which has produced an immense impression, and which has definitely affected the decision of that critical and heterogeneous body. How did he persuade his hearers? The answer, of course, is that he did it by rhetoric. Being a man of very great common sense, he knows exactly the strings upon which he himself can play with most effect. Both his language and his argument are in fact carefully and subtly considered.

“ Artis abest species ; ars in utroque latet.”

I suspect that what Mr. Baldwin really had in mind was that meretricious and overdone style of rhetoric which has often brought the art into discredit. But if I am right here, his charge should be brought not against good rhetoric, but against bad rhetoric. A good spade is a good spade ; a bad spade is no particular use to any-

one. But no useful purpose at all is served by abusing spades generically.

Some of the greatest rhetoricians have been men of extraordinary simplicity. Such was John Bright. Such, in the main (though far more eloquent), was Demosthenes. Cicero, on the contrary, was elaborate and parenthetical, much more akin to Mr. Gladstone, though infinitely more readable, because more literary.

No generalisations are possible in relation to the subject of rhetoric. Its purpose is to persuade. If it persuades without unworthiness, it cannot be bad rhetoric, and it deserves commendation, not depreciation.

As a matter of fact, the Sermon on the Mount (as rendered by the translators of the Authorised Version) is the most superb specimen of rhetoric which the English language can afford. It is simple ; it is tender ; its language is most exquisite ; its appeal to all that is noblest in humanity most poignant.

In a very different style, it may perhaps be claimed that Mark Antony's speech to the populace in Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* is the second most instructive example of advocacy in our language. And yet this speech is as subtle and sophisticated as the Sermon is sweet and simple.

I select these two illustrations because it is necessary to make it plain that the finest oratory may be either very simple or very studied. You may have bad (because unpersuasive) ornamentation ; but equally, you may have bad (because unpersuasive) baldness. The orator's purpose, once again, is to convince and to persuade. His instrument is his tongue ; his success must almost always determine the valuation of his personal art.

There is a certain quality in Mr. Baldwin's speech which is individual. He contrives always to throw over the footlights the conception of himself—strictly founded upon fact—that he is a very sincere and one-purposed man. To attain this result, even where the facts support one, requires no small gift of advocacy. In the second place, he has derived something both from his business training and from his strongly pronounced rural tastes which produces an interesting and even an arresting complex. In one sentence he is the man of business, the last of an honourable line of shrewd steel-merchants ; in the next he seems somehow to stray into the character of a man in gaiters looking at a pig, and yet with an eye of vivid, almost sensuous, pleasure in the beauties of the surrounding English countryside.

His rhetorical strength is therefore twofold. On the one side it springs from an inherited business acuteness ; on the other from the love of England, and of all that England stands for, of the vernal countryside, of narrow winding lanes hidden by sweet-scented English hedges.

No one who has read as widely and as fastidiously as Mr. Baldwin should even affect to under-rate rhetoric. His own public vocabulary is selected with much literary nicety. The speech which he recently delivered at the dinner of the Worcestershire Association would, if published to-morrow, be recognised everywhere as an essay of distinction.

And so I find myself quite unable to resist the conclusion that just as Saul was ironically acclaimed among the Prophets, so Mr. Baldwin must be dragged into the great company of the Rhetoricians. Never again must he describe the Lady of Rhetoric in the disparaging phrase with which I began this short notice ; for he has pursued that Lady, and he has caught her.

For quotation I select a passage from the Worcestershire Association speech to which I have referred :

“ I like to think that through the centuries,

though much has changed, in some parts little has changed. There have abided through all time two features—the Forest of Wye and the Severn Valley. Nothing has altered that and nothing can. In the valley no plough has ever been. From the earliest times men have tended there their cattle and sheep, and that swift turbid stream has rolled on from the beginning of history, beautiful but treacherous to strangers. Yet to those who have been born in that valley, whose people have lived in it and who hope to die in it, that river represents the heart and the core of all they love. It is an unchanging countryside. There is a field near my home, more than a mile long, curving through woods down to the river, which I never enter without feeling I have stepped back into the days of Chaucer, and it would not surprise me to meet his pilgrims ambling on their palfreys over the greensward.”

And of Mr. Baldwin's Parliamentary speeches I take the peroration of his moving address in the House of Commons on the Trade Union (Political Fund) Bill two years ago :

“ We offer the country to-day this : We, at any rate, are not going to fire the first shot. We stand for peace. We stand for atmosphere, a new atmosphere in a new Parliament for a new age, in which the people can come together. We abandon what we have laid our hands to. We know we may be called cowards for doing it.

We know we may be told that we have gone back on our principles. But we believe we know what at this moment the country wants, and we believe it is for us in our strength to do what no other country can do at this moment, and to say that we at any rate stand for peace. . . .

“ Although I know that there are those who work for different ends from most of us in this House, yet there are many in all ranks and all parties who will re-echo my prayer : ‘ *Give peace in our time, O Lord.* ’ ”

XVI

REALITY AND OPPORTUNITY

REALITY and opportunity at the present day are rightly contrasted, like truth in the unity of its varying aspects, by the image of two sides of the same shield. No thinking man will be disposed to deny that while realities are stern, opportunities to live well are still abundant in this, the third decade of the twentieth century. Opportunities mean, in the long run, a chance for men and women to make good in the world. They must be differentiated in terms of hope, from whatever starting-point of class or fortune they may be envisaged in advance. Thus, though realities are very often stern, sometimes afflicting, the necessary discipline of life is part of that affliction; and faith, with nerve, will overcome every difficulty, if only the will to win keeps strong.

A dubious peace has followed a devastating war, and this dual fact must influence every prospect, every human conception of present duty. But the problem before us, the choice

of a career, has never been deeply affected by the ravages of time.

Each generation in turn is confronted with it and with its inherent difficulties. It remains an issue of paramount interest for young and old, whether the nations be positively at variance or relatively at rest. But it is the young who must concentrate their attention upon it. Happily, no man grows old all at once. Just at what stage he may be forced to develop no more is an open question. Science constantly offers new possibilities. Meanwhile, there is nothing cruelly oppressive or finally disabling in the obstacles thrown up by reality. But caution is always necessary.

My own word of caution at this stage shall be a very gentle one. Anyone who sets out adventurously will always find it an asset of great value—an asset which will be appreciated by others—if temperament, apart from training, incline him to think respectfully of the past. These are times when a tendency to chastise the experienced, on the part of those by whom experience has yet to be gained, is one of the more distressing because one of the most prevalent of errors.

Therefore I would pray from the gods—for

anyone in whom I might be specially interested—one endowment : one precious gift : the bump of veneration. Reserve should mark its expression, of course. There is no advantage in excess. But I emphasise this point, in considering the reality of the world of youth, as related to opportunity, because I could not hope to offer a liberal and open-minded contribution to a most important subject if I did not first utter a plea for established values ; in a word, for that reasoned conservatism on which alone the hopes of a country can be built up anew. No sophistication of reasoning will ever prove that we can legitimately be independent of our forefathers, or indifferent to the accumulations, material, spiritual, or moral, which they have left behind them.

The need of education presses hardly on many a young spirit, but the times at least are propitious for those who desire, above all, to extend the period of learning before their individual fight against uncertain odds must begin. Here, though much has been done, much still remains to be done. But those demonstrations in favour of the highest available culture, which are everywhere observed, are neither formal nor unnecessary.

The realities of the present day are full of anxiety for every human being—for the employer or employed, for the teacher or the taught—for individuals who have to solve the crucial problems of family life, or for adolescent units, themselves active factors in the recurrent struggle for existence. Nevertheless we are emerging from years pregnant with perplexity. And that prognostication is perfectly safe which asserts that our leadership in the world's affairs has not yet failed, and is not likely to fail. A conviction of this kind will be of value to all who are setting out in life. Any young man of to-day, dubious though he may be when considering the course he desires or can afford to follow, may sink his identity for a moment in contemplation of that big family, it may be of the nation, it may be of the Empire, of which he is a part.

It is good to recognise personal defects, individual limitations, but weak and dangerous to exaggerate them. All cannot take a part in leadership. But it is open to all to make some contribution to the civic strength of a leading nation. And this is, in a sense, to lead. Moreover, a desire to serve the community is a form of altruistic zeal which will often receive its special reward. The man who puts the whole before the

part, and his fellows before himself, will not go very far wrong in the practical efforts which make up the essence of his own life. We stand or fall, as a nation, by our playing of the game. So, too, the man who learns early in life the lesson of team-work will find, eventually, the best way to win a definite place for himself. As Mr. Rudyard Kipling and Sir Edward Elgar have sung between them :

“ The game is more than the player of the game,
And the ship is more than the crew.”

Having thus postulated that real gain will come to a man if he steep himself in tradition ; having spoken up for physical activities, knowing that skill in any wholesome pastime reacts on the soul ; having commended the salutary use of time in service to others ; I will turn to those vague aspirations towards a distinctive if not actually distinguished life which are no inconsiderable part of youth's equipment.

It may even happen that life opens with a kind of disillusion. Some arrow may fail its mark, or the very target be suddenly snatched out the sight. The results are embitterments, despairs. Not so can realities be faced. Manly independence is essential. Measures, of which every mind is capable, must be taken by the individual to

check the sense of injury, to banish despondency, to make what Mrs. Dombey in the famous novel failed to make, an effort. Besides, all men do not aim at the same thing, though there is always, in the narrowest circle, something worth aiming at. Therefore we need not rebel, even vicariously, on behalf of those who start to become, and remain for the whole of their mortal existence, hewers of wood and drawers of water for others. To "fling away ambition" may prove a good thing in some cases; and a virtuous, plodding life, "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd," may be the happiest career.

But the idea that there is any virtue in standing stock still—accepting one's natural endowments as they are, or one's position, often the accident of an accident, as practically immutable—these notions are exploded and hopelessly out of date: they are, like the proceedings against St. Joan of Arc, "annihilated, null, of no value or effect."

No, faint-heartedness in any emergency is foreign to the spirit of man, and it is not necessary to reach down the Poet Laureate's anthology from its shelf to establish my reasons for saying so. Rebellion against the stationary condition in character or in affairs is as natural to the average young man of to-day as "the gloomy

slumber of the stagnant soul " was odious to Dr. Johnson: though that great man could smile on " the towering confidence of twenty-one." But youth should have its own confidence. For youth is the time for dreams, and in the idea that " the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts," all the poets are at one. The newest feeling of all, that every child born amongst us has a right to go forward beyond his progenitors, does tally, I verily believe, with all reasonable aspirations. And so I find myself on the same side as the rebels and the sages and the poets; on the side, too, of every individual on the look out for a satisfactory future, by which must be understood development, progressiveness, success, and a satisfactory share of the good things of this earth.

Here, as I am thus ranged, even against some traditionalists, with the friends of freedom, I will try to explain on what principles, and by what actions, the dreams of which I have spoken may become realities.

Of one tradition it is necessary to speak in balanced language, not only because for long it was loaded with prejudices, but also because it is not absolutely clear how far these prejudices have been removed. There are plenty of rough-and-

ready definitions which divide the professional from the business man. Some sections of society, some localities, are still petrified by an unwillingness to perceive that dividing lines of class have grown thinner. The countryside will long keep, I trust, some distinctions which make for dignity and refinement, but the provinces have ceased to regard with amazement their own drift to the towns. And town life has amalgamated professional and business interests in a remarkable way. Add to these facts, without depreciating other centres, the overmastering appeal of London, *Urbs Urbium*, and those in search of a career will recognise how life has become centralised. "All things precious, or useful, or intoxicating," said Emerson some eighty years ago, "are floated to London." London has vastly increased this absorptive power since then. Let the neophyte keep his eye on this, the hub of our moving world's wheel, which seems to be at one moment the heart of the commercial and intellectual universe; at another the head; or, again, these vital organs combined.

All this is a reminder that as business and professional interests commingle—as the provincial circumference feels itself often to be at one with the central metropolis—as the intellectual

interests of the country link themselves up with the commercial—so, with a completeness that would satisfy my noble and learned friend Lord Haldane and his most subtle teaching about relativity, the essential unity of things which seemed diverse is proven. And we are back, once more, at the point where we were considering the vital need which there is for every man to extend his knowledge. For reality and opportunity are sometimes terribly at variance over education.

Thomas Carlyle, whom I might dispraise for exuberance, but must commend for insight, used to declare that the true and sufficient university for any man was a collection of books. The declaration was fine and fair, and will be appreciated here, where the necessity of earning a living is not for an instant to be lost sight of. Many of us have a knowledge of attaining university status ; and sympathise with the difficulties which surround this particular aim. Here is some encouragement. The conditions are growing easier. But, whether a man reaches the university or not—and any effort will be worth the strain—he must to a great extent lean on books for ideas. I could indeed wish a worse fate for a man than a university consisting only

of books. And access to the best of books is free in every populous centre. Whatever we may learn from books, however, will not carry us far unless we supplement them by our own imagination, our own idiosyncrasy. Imagination is a great force in professional life. In business it is greater.

It will not be doubted, however, bearing in mind these realities, especially the *res angusta domi*, that the university itself must be the best of openings to the learned professions. And here we rub shoulders with other men in friendly rivalry; here, and with their aid, "our own felicity we make or find." Education is more than ever in a state of flux. The university system is partial and inadequate. The University Extension movement grows slowly. But chances are increasing, and a man who has the root of the matter in him may well find encouragement in the scholarship system as it is. It offers many a chance of assistance which can be accepted with pride, for it recognises individual merit, and it is based on self-help as much as it is furthered by benevolence.

But now we will suppose that the adaptation of means to ends has been overcome. The professions in which the higher education still plays

a special part are the Church, the Law, Education, Medicine, Science, the Arts, and the Services: these latter including the naval and military and civilian branches in all their ramifications. Now, though there is in a sense a cleavage between these lines of life and the life commercial, business is in reality the source of all wealth in the community; and thus there is one sense in which business, as such, has a right to take a lead over the professions. But the universities of to-day, and even the universities which take precedence in prestige, are, being the homes of reason, alive to the business claim, and it will not be denied by the strictest pundit on earth that every professional man is the better for business methods, and that every academic attainment is enhanced if it is supplemented by a business training.

And so, let us consider the professions.

The Church, speaking of it as a profession for active men, is rightly a vocation above others, although every profession should be looked at in this light. We mean, for instance, quite as much when we speak of a "call" to the Bar. One practical consideration, a sincere belief, should permeate the man who seeks such essential work as this. I need not stress the importance,

the necessity of religion. In candour, however, discontent with religion as professed and practised is actually rife. Disappointment with the intellectual performances of the clergy, unpopularity and alleged inefficacy of churches as a whole—these things must be faced as realities. But the opportunity for every man who would become an apostle of high thoughts, who would serve his age by acts of usefulness and mercy—combined with practical work, which no minister can escape—such opportunity is really ample to-day. Not only is the field open, it is greatly understaffed. In the higher branches of such service, though not on the business scale, the prospects of pay and of distinction are sufficient. And any man whose conscience permits him thus to assume leadership and guidance of his fellows will find that so great is the need of suitable men, that, as regards the expense of training, his path can be smoothed in innumerable ways by organisations which have been established and must necessarily respond to a growing need. And these identical things are in every way as true for the profession of a don, a schoolmaster, a teacher of any kind.

Of the Bar as a profession, it is not even necessary to attempt a disquisition concerning those majestic principles which the law embodies in

order to recommend it. Here, as the essence of truth, probity, equity, it excels most other possibilities for a man, regarded simply as a vocation. For the exceptional man it is the finest profession in the world. But here it is sadly true that too many are called, too few are chosen. A ten years' apprenticeship is practically necessary for any man who will follow with success this exigent profession. It means some support, some crutch, all the time. Reality, in the sense of a deterrent, is too strong, therefore, to reassert in this particular the encouraging prospects which may or may not materialise. The Bar demands the highest staying-power. But, outside the courts, it is good that there are many cases where to be a barrister is to validate some purely extraneous claim to work of varying kinds—to service, to business, to promotion. Some of the highest successes at the Bar have been grasped by men who have qualified in other professions first. This is another aspect of those variations and amalgamations which have become so common in modern life. It is at least of hopeful augury to young men that it is no crime to change one's profession. For the rest, opportunities at the Bar are never wanting, though it is a fact that those who can negotiate the

preliminaries for a call find they have set themselves the hardest task to succeed.

The solicitor's branch of the legal profession is even more solidly fenced round by vested interests. Its labours are intricate and considerable ; they require assiduity and grip. They involve some serious risks. But the work involved leads to a general average of pecuniary returns which is not to be despised, and while it does not rank socially with the Bar, its character as a link between the professional and business sides of life is very important, and the man who can pass into it may as a rule consider himself satisfactorily settled for life.

As to the arts and services, I do not think there will be much conflict concerning the outlook everywhere. Reality interposes its obstacles in every branch, for all are affected by the complex problems created by the taxation we are bearing. There are some peculiarities about the fighting services, as there are about the pacific arts, which must resolutely be borne in mind. The boy intended for the navy must have his mind fixed for him very early. A ship, it has been said, is nothing but a prison. Yet it is to those who have manned our ships that this great country owes its freedom, its security, its life. For a

maritime people, we are strangely inappreciative of the work of the navy. The reason doubtless lies in the fact that this is a silent service. Entry to the navy is not difficult for those who have a family tradition behind them, or an inclination of the mind, a thing that often betrays itself in childhood and does not change. The restrictions as to entry, and even the expenses, are not so formidable as they are in many other professions, and as a career those who make it their objective and their pride seldom have reason to regret it. Service in the army is naturally the centre of a thousand devotions. To acquire his Majesty's commission presents difficulties which still have to be surmounted by the aid of a fairly elastic purse. It would be a deception to declare that the path which was to have been made much easier has followed that praiseworthy and munificent intention, of which much was made in the later stages of the Great War. Still, the ladders that are being set up by which assistance is procurable for men with the right kind of physique, brain, gifts, are by no means negligible.

The universities are being drawn into an official scheme which is not lacking in generosity, and those who have the required virility, and are keen to stand up for their country throughout their

lives, will not be baulked of their desire if the true determination seizes them. Events have altered the position of the regular army, no doubt. We have learned that every man must answer the country's call. But still the scope of the profession remains unchanged. Unaltered are the grand traditions which have made us a great military nation.

If there is a service which cannot be written of in terms so glowing as these, it is the service of bureaucracy. Bureaucracy will never appeal to the really great man. And yet it need not become a deadening vocation. The indefinable duties of statesmen could not be performed without expert official help. And here is a service with multifarious branches. Access to any of them is jealously guarded. But realities, for a civil servant, are compatible with many opportunities. It has even been found possible for men in this occupation to supply their full meed of work and yet to make a mark in literature. Here is that ideal position for some temperaments: a regular occupation, an adequate pension on retirement, a certain recognised position. For those who possess restful but capable qualities of mind, the chances in the civil service are decidedly alluring; and this remains true at a time

when the system of appointments causes some searching of hearts. Admission to the service may be temporarily difficult, but it remains a legitimate ambition for the promising boy, and he who casts a longing eye upon it should be encouraged.

There remain the Arts. A great subject, for it comprises the highest of individualistic claims. It is concerned with the determination of talent, perhaps of genius. Imagination is useful to any profession or business, but here imagination and its congeners are supreme. Art covers some great scientific interests in its domain, of which the healing art comes first, and those who would adopt the high calling of the doctor know, without being told, that this is a profession requiring a long and expensive training, with prospects of distinction equal to the value of the service ultimately rendered. But this branch of activity would need a dissertation to itself. Art, in fact, includes the student of every conceivable type. That is why scholars were designated—in the Middle Ages—Masters of Arts. The musician, the painter, the naturalist, the researcher, the author, the journalist : to these, yes, and to their sacrifices, the greatness of a country will very often be due. Rules it is impossible to lay down

where the artist's temperament has stepped in ; but this is to be said, as showing that there are some principles which remain eternally true. Even genius must take pains. But genius does take them. The greatest artists have won the day against the greatest conceivable odds. Here lies the exceeding importance, herein is assured the ultimate triumph, of individualism.

Perhaps the strongest bond between all the forms of activity will always be the man who can write ; write well, inspire, educate, persuade. The publicist creates this bond. The entry to his world of usefulness is free to all. In him reality and opportunity are constantly meeting. He may be trained ; he may find his medium of expression by accident. From him the fresh light on current affairs or the hopes of the future may spring. And thus it is not surprising that energy of this kind is on the increase, that the profession of the writer is recruited from every possible source, and that the whole of the business world conspires to give fresh opportunities to the individual who can express himself well.

In the end, business capacity rules the world in which we live. The liberal professions and the commercial world have united. What is good for

the one is good for the other. This is promising enough for the youth of to-day. It is fruitful enough in anticipation to dissipate some fears which still linger, drawn from the obscurantism of a day that is dead. Business is business, says the proverb. The saying is sometimes cynically quoted as conveying the idea that any sharp practice can be condoned, that the course to be run need not necessarily be a straight one. But business is only really good business which has no canker of unfairness at the heart; and this country stands to-day erect throughout the world, with a standard nobly borne and fairly flown. There is here no need to declare in what this pre-eminence of honour has consisted. It is all blazoned on the devices of our merchant princes. It can be read on the signs which succeed the quaint emblems which studded the old shop-fronts of Lombard Street. This is a country in which commerce has long held its own established and perfected sway. And a clerk behind any counter, a traveller for any firm, has the ball at his feet. For him reality can have no terrors. For him opportunities are more abundant than ever before. From any humble beginning he has all before him, the very highest of possibilities, provided that he recognises that the commercial

life, of all lives, leaves him free to use that imagination for the use of which I have pleaded, and offers him, in the vast expansion of the countries of the earth, greater chances of adventure and of fortune than any other century has known.

Having offered one gentle word of caution at the outset, I now offer another of a different type. There is a great need for every man who is entering life to know himself; to recognise that only the exceptional man can win the exceptional place. But as the reasonable man will accept this without demur, it only remains to press home the truth that everything in life must depend on the emergence of character. Due weight has been given to the peculiar conditions of our time. Due heed must be paid to the dangers of the immediate future. Emergence of character means emergence of the individual. For dead-levels of mediocrity the centuries that are coming can have no possible use. We are sometimes threatened with the control of socialistic or communist theorists. Even the suggestions they have made are grown to a parlous horror of infertile and insane ideas. The individual who faces reality, conscious of opportunity, will fight against these. He will do it the better

if he studies with care the work of those who have toiled before him, accepting rough and smooth, ready to strive and to endure, unafraid of any reality, eager to embrace any opportunity.

“ The world belongs to those who come the last,
They shall find hope and strength, as we have done ! ”

XVII

MILESTONES OF MY LIFE

I. A CLASSICAL SCHOLARSHIP AT WADHAM COLLEGE, OXFORD

I HAVE been invited to select six occasions in my life which could fairly be described as "milestones" in the sense that each was vitally important to me in that life as I look back upon its chances, possibilities, and uncertainties in retrospect. Such a series of studies must, in the very nature of the case, be egotistic. But I hope that some allowance may be made for this circumstance. There must be many young men very willing to hold some of the offices which I have held, and not disinclined to consider any steps in the career of one very willing to help them, which may happen, even if only here and there, to afford some guidance.

Once and for all, therefore, I make my apology that the very nature of what I have been asked to write makes it necessary to bring myself constantly into the forefront of the picture. I hope that I shall be able to tell the story, such as it is,

without overvaluing that which I am, or that, such as it is, which I have achieved.

I was educated at an old and excellent school, Birkenhead School. It is larger now than in my day. Indeed, I believe that with the Preparatory School, which is really part of it, it consists of nearly five hundred boys. In my day the Headmaster was the Rev. A. Sloman, Editor of *Terence*, once a President of the Oxford Union Society, and, before he came to Birkenhead, Master of the Queen's Scholars at Westminster. Birkenhead School has the distinction in the athletic world of having produced a larger number of distinguished Rugby football players than any other school of the same size in the kingdom. It has for years fed the famous Birkenhead Park Football Club; its county players and its University Blues have been innumerable. Nor has it lacked distinguished international players. Indeed, in the present English team the famous centre three-quarters, Locke, was a former captain of the Birkenhead School team.

I may perhaps recall with loyal satisfaction the circumstance that when I was in the Upper Sixth under Sloman, the form consisted of only five boys; there being about sixteen in the Lower Sixth. Of the five boys who constituted

the Upper Sixth, four, Patterson, Duckworth, C. T. Wood, and myself, obtained Fellowships at either Oxford or Cambridge ; while the fifth, Robson, obtained an important Exhibition at Trinity College, Cambridge. I have caused inquiries to be made, and I believe it to be a fact that at the date in question no Public School in England—Eton, Harrow, Winchester, Westminster, or any of them—could show such an extraordinary record.

There comes to every ambitious and promising boy when he nears the end of his school days the necessity of choosing a career. It often happened at Birkenhead, where many of the prosperous Liverpool merchants sent their sons, that the decision was an easy one ; for a comfortable paternal business awaited at least the eldest son. But Birkenhead School has always sent a considerable number of its members to one or other of our Universities. I yield to no one in my admiration for our modern Universities, or for the public spirit and munificence which have so admirably equipped them. But I shall give offence to no one if I make it plain that, excepting the Scottish Universities (though the case of Scotland is a little, but not entirely, different), the cleverest boys at all our great schools will

always try, to the best of their powers, to go either to Oxford or to Cambridge. If their abilities lie in the direction of what are called the Humanities—pure scholarship, Philosophy, Ancient History, or Literature—they will probably on the whole do well, if they can, to drift towards Oxford. The mathematician, the scientist, the engineer, and the medical man of the future will, on the whole, whether he be right or wrong, be advised to set his eyes towards the River Cam.

The kind of boy who interests me is not so much the one who can go to Oxford or Cambridge aided by a comfortable allowance from his father, but the boy who can only go if he wins a scholarship. If such a one is clever enough to win either a scholarship or an exhibition (the value of scholarships was, I believe, and still is, between £100 and £80 a year, and that of exhibitions between £60 and £30), he has a nucleus which may perhaps be reinforced by a school scholarship. I do not think that these values have altered much since the War, though evidently the spending value was much higher in the happy pre-War days.

I belonged to the class which could not have gone to Oxford unless its members obtained a scholarship. My father died at the early age of forty-three, when I was seventeen years old,

leaving my mother in straitened circumstances and with five children to bring up and educate. An uncle of mine, the late Mr. E. P. Smith, of Birkenhead, whose genial memory still lives in the town of Birkenhead, was willing to give me a degree of assistance which in all the circumstances was extremely generous. But he had a large family of his own, and his help was reasonably made conditional upon my winning an open scholarship. In those days Balliol College held its examination first in the academic year. That examination was closely followed by those jointly held at Trinity and Wadham Colleges. I was to have competed at Balliol, but was prevented by an attack of neuralgia. I do not, however, think that I should have succeeded, for I was not a particularly exact scholar, and in those days the methods of discrimination employed at Balliol seemed to me to be somewhat formal and precise—perhaps a little too Balliol-like.

Nor had my only previous attempt at winning a scholarship been crowned by much success. As a boy of thirteen I tried for a scholarship at Harrow School when Bishop Welldon was Headmaster. In those days the examiners rejected what were known as “half-wits” after two days’ examination, thereby making it plain

that those who were so rejected were merely cumbering up the ground to the embarrassment of really promising young scholars. I was among the "half-wits." But time brought its consolations. For so also were Ramsay, destined to win an open scholarship (I think the senior one) at Eton, to become a distinguished House Master in that ancient foundation, and to be one of the best classical scholars of our generation; and Amery, one day to hold high Cabinet rank, to win two First Classes and a Fellowship at All Souls', to be a wonderful linguist, and to develop into a versatile and gifted historian.

It was, however, in no spirit of excessive confidence that I went up in the month of December to try my fortune at the Trinity and Wadham examination. I was advised by a frugal friend to stay at the Wilberforce Temperance Hotel, where I was made extremely comfortable, though I have never happened to stay there since. After dinner on the night of my arrival I proceeded to survey the *terrain*. Trinity College was rather fashionable, Wadham not at all so. But I looked at the two colleges on a brilliant moonlight night, when the beauty of Oxford was rendered even more exquisite, and if possible purer, by a dazzling mantle of snow. I saw Trinity first, and then

I passed along the Broad Street to that grey and perfect façade which has remained unaltered since the enlightened and splendid bounty of Nicholas and Dorothy Wadham dedicated a noble building for the education of students from the West of England. I passed into that quadrangle which has undergone no change, save where time has mellowed it, since a divine architect gave expression to his genius in terms of stone ; and advancing through the quadrangle towards the chapel, I turned, left-handed, into the most beautiful garden in Oxford, walked to the old cedar tree, which, alas ! has since perished, then turned round and saw, radiant in the moonlight, the grey, almost white outlines of the chapel and the long line of ancient gables which make, whether you see it by day or whether you see it by night, the most enchanting spectacle which Oxford can afford. The haunting beauty of that winter scene determined my choice in one swift moment. I cared then, I am glad to recall, little for fashion ; I cared intensely for beauty. Every candidate was required to express a preference for one college or another. While I entertain the most profound respect for Trinity College, I shall all my life rejoice that I chose Wadham.

And so the examination began. It lasted for about five days. It took place in the beautiful hall of Wadham College, and culminated in a *viva voce* held in the oak-panelled common-room at the top of an old and winding wooden staircase. I was asked, I remember, by Warden Thorley whether I was a candidate for an exhibition if I were not selected for scholarship. I replied that I could not afford to go to Oxford except as a scholar. The answer, I have always suspected, was a judicious one.

And then there came some days of extreme suspense. In my own case it was not even certain that I should be able to afford the £10 journey money necessary to make another attempt if I failed in this ; and therefore I lingered on, anxiously but temperately, at my Temperance Hotel, waiting for another group of scholarships (probably my last) if I failed at Wadham. And then it became known that the list would be published at the Porter's Lodge at 11 o'clock on Monday morning. Five minutes before that hour, a young man—almost a boy—feeling extremely unsuccessful, remembering (how vividly !) all the mistakes he had made, was waiting in the Porter's Lodge. He little suspected that he would live to be Fellow of Wadham, Fellow of Merton,

Vinerian Scholar, and High Steward of Oxford University.

I can still see the old porter, a veteran, I believe, of the Indian Mutiny, coming from the Warden's lodging—how slow he was!—with a sheet of paper. He opened a glass case—again how slowly!—produced four brass pins, and proceeded to pin up an announcement written in the scholarly hand of Warden Thorley, which I can see before me as I write, to the effect that the scholars elected at Wadham College as the result of the examination were, in the following order :

C. B. Fry.

A. B. Willimot.

W. H. Anstie.

F. E. Smith.

I was indeed the junior of all four scholars, but I had won, none the less, an open classical scholarship, and whatever straits and difficulties lay in front of me, it was at least certain that I should have the opportunity of an Oxford career. I took the next train back to Birkenhead. The Great Western express (it was called, I still remember, the Zulu) was fast enough, but I was travelling in my mind faster far. For I knew

perfectly well, that though in the last place on the list, I had been afforded an opportunity which might be decisive of my whole future career. I was to be educated side by side with those who were to be my rivals and competitors for the rest of my life. They would enjoy no advantage, social or educational, which was denied to me. The field thereafter was open to competition; and I felt confident that I was able to compete.

I did not, of course, fail to realise that I was going to Oxford with very slender and inadequate financial resources. But I was sanguine enough to believe that the first thing was to get there; that somehow or other things would work out for the best afterwards. I had, indeed, a very small income upon which I could rely. It proved, even with reasonable economy, quite inadequate to the life which I was called upon to lead, having regard to the social and athletic commitments which soon proved to be necessary. But here a much-abused, though occasionally indispensable, Oxford institution came to my aid—I mean its disputable credit system, which I for one can never find it in my heart to disparage. In the absence of that system I could certainly never have completed my University career. When I took my degree I suppose I was in debt to the

extent of about £300. Had my creditors chosen to have done so, or found it worth while to do so, they could easily (and, indeed, without resistance) have made me bankrupt. They never showed the slightest disposition to do so: but, on the contrary, always treated me with the greatest patience and consideration. And I had the satisfaction within two years (it was in the year 1895 that I took my Final School) of discharging the last penny of my indebtedness. I still deal with many of the tradesmen who showed me kindness at a moment when it counted for so much in my life.

I have, I hope, said enough to justify the view that the winning of this scholarship at Wadham College was the first memorable "milestone" in my career.

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2. MY MAIDEN SPEECH AT THE OXFORD UNION SOCIETY

The Oxford Union Society is probably on the whole the most famous debating Society in the world. It is much disputed whether or not it is older in date than the sister Society at Cambridge. But it is hardly necessary for Oxford men to pursue this particular dispute too closely; for

it is indisputable that the roll of distinguished men contributed by the Oxford Union to the service of the Empire is incomparably more brilliant than can be claimed by the sister Society. There have debated in the Oxford Union : Gladstone, Salisbury, Manning, Milner, Swinburne, Asquith, Curzon, and hundreds of others whose names are household words in statecraft, in letters, and in theology.

But the very exceptional prestige of this particular Society must not be allowed to obscure the general advice which I offer to all students at all Universities. It does not matter whether the University be Oxford, Cambridge, Glasgow, Liverpool, or Sheffield : each of these Universities has a general, as contrasted with a sectional, Debating Society ; and my earnest advice to all young men is regularly to attend these societies and regularly to take part in their discussions. The motto of the undergraduate, however self-conscious and diffident his nature, should be : *Semper ego auditor tantum?*

The reason which underlies this advice is evident. It is far too early to say whether democracy as a form of government will be permanent in the political systems of history. It may prove so ; and on the other hand it may not.

If it abuses its numerical power in such a manner or to such an extent as to imperil the safety of the whole body politic, there will certainly result reactions, possibly revolutions, which will in the last resort put its pretensions to the decision of the sword. This decisive test may be applied in a variety of ways. In Soviet Russia democracy has undergone sabotage by those who proclaimed themselves its high-priests. In Italy the Fascist Movement has contemptuously, without even troubling to pay it lip-service, scourged it from the seats of government. But in this country, in our Dominions, and in the United States of America democracy is far too deeply entrenched to afford such a prospect; unless, therefore, it is guilty of wild and incredible excess it will not be violently dispossessed as a system of government.

These speculations may appear to diverge somewhat widely from my particular purpose. But the divergence is apparent rather than actual. A wise and philosophical Roman writer once observed that the art of rhetoric was of incomparable value in a democracy, but counted for comparatively little under an autocracy. This generalisation is profoundly true. Julius Cæsar cared little, and Augustus less, for those

who possessed this golden gift. To Oliver Cromwell an orator was merely a bore ; and except upon the 18th Brumaire Napoleon the Great had no use for "spell-binders."

But it seems, on the whole, worth while to assume, though not over-confidently, that the democracy of this country will not so grotesquely abuse its evident numerical advantages as to involve the country, or alternatively itself, in ruin. Until it does so the divine gift of persuasive speech will count for as much in Great Britain as in any country in the history of the world ; not even excluding ancient Athens, whose citizens profoundly admired their orators, but generally neglected to accept their advice.

I assume, therefore, for the purpose of the counsel which I am about to offer, the probability that a democratic system of government will endure for a considerable, if not even for an indefinite, period in this country. If we accept this hypothesis, it becomes evident at once how foolish and inconsiderate any young man is who neglects any opportunity of acquiring the gift of public speech, or if he possesses it by nature, of neglecting its improvement. It is exactly at this point that the Debating Unions of our Universities, old and new, afford a priceless opportunity.

At Oxford and Cambridge each separate college possesses its own debating society. Considerable opportunities are there afforded for advancement and improvement. But on the whole the debates are conducted either too formally or too informally. If too formally, they become extremely dull ; if too informally, they degenerate into flippancy. That Society which represents the whole University may be open to criticism upon many points ; but at least it provides him who would master the art of speech with a theatre where debate is formally conducted, and where he is compelled to equip himself by preparation and arrangement for the delivery of a set speech. I have frequently heard men, sometimes of the greatest distinction, who never spoke at the Oxford Union regret their omission. I have never heard anyone who took part in its debates regret that he did so.

I am naturally more familiar with the Oxford Union than with any other great debating society. I was junior Treasurer there and afterwards President. I was indeed elected to each office without a contest. Many of the happiest and most exciting memories of my University life centred around that Society. It was indeed in my day a wonderful club. A subscription

of ten guineas without an entrance fee made a man a life-member of the Society. And among the privileges—though since the War I understand that this has been withdrawn—was that of having all his letters stamped free of cost even if he chose to write a hundred a day. The club-rooms, greatly reinforced since my day, are hardly inferior to those of any club in the world, and it offers too—what hardly another club in the world can offer—the opportunity of acquiring and perfecting public speech in the historic surroundings which have been adorned at one period or another by almost all the great orators of the British Empire.

I therefore most earnestly advise every freshman at every University—and particularly every Oxford freshman, for after all I know Oxford best—not only to join his Union Debating Society but to speak at it constantly. Above all, do not be afraid of boring your audience. That, after all, is more their worry than yours. And inasmuch as in your earlier stages you will rise late in the evening when few are present, you will probably be right in drawing the inference that the majority of those who are giving you an unwilling audience are desirous of speaking themselves and resent the preference which

has been given to you. These deserve no mercy at your hands. And after all you have paid your subscription and you are entitled to speak whenever the President calls upon you to do so ; and it is far better that you should bore a number of young gentlemen at the University of Oxford than that you should bore other people afterwards, whose disapproval might easily prove more serious. Remember that Charles Fox partly explained his amazing gift for Parliamentary debate by the fact that he had spoken on every single night for two whole sessions of Parliament. Frequently his hearers were considerably fatigued and annoyed ; but he was by no means concerned to consider their wishes ; and constant practice, combined with shining natural gifts, went to make him one of the two first orators of his generation.

I had not myself, when I went to Oxford, given any particular indication that I possessed any gift of public speech. My father indeed, the late Mr. Frederick Smith, of Birkenhead, both as a barrister and as a politician had gained an immense local reputation in Birkenhead and Liverpool as a powerful and eloquent speaker. But I can hardly remember a period of my life at which it was not my steadfast purpose to ac-

quire, as far as I could, the gift which I had so much admired in him. I had always, therefore, made up my mind that if ever I made my way to Oxford I would try my fortune at the famous Oxford Union Debating Society. It so happened that in my day this Society was enjoying one of its recurrent periods of efflorescence. Contemporary with me were the Earl of Crawford, Earl Beauchamp, Mr. Hilaire Belloc, the Earl of Donoughmore, Sir John Simon and many others who have since sat in British Cabinets or stamped their names upon the world of letters.

As a rule a new member of the Society must work his way up from the bottom. In every debate four speakers—two on each side—are invited by the President to conduct the earlier stages of the debate. The names of these speakers are printed and circulated in every college in Oxford. When their considered efforts are concluded, the debate is thrown open to all and sundry. It usually therefore happens that before an aspiring orator is given an opportunity of speaking, as the phrase goes, “on the paper,” he must attract attention by a promising speech made in a comparatively empty house. I was fortunate in this respect that an ex-Secretary of the Union, Mr. C. H. Eliot, son of the late Dean

of Windsor, came as a guest to the Wadham Debating Society. I made a flippant speech about some subject or other which I have forgotten. The result was, however, that he caused me to be invited to speak "on the paper" in the most important debate of his Presidency. Sir Wilfrid Lawson, then at the height of his reputation as the wittiest speaker hitherto produced by the Teetotal Movement, had been induced to visit Oxford and deliver an oration in favour of local option. I was invited to speak in opposition to the motion and immediately before the guest of the evening. By a strange chance, the motion was recommended also in a maiden speech by the present Earl of Crawford (then Lord Balcarres), who, I suppose, has made no other speech in favour of local option, and has consistently voted against it since, both in the House of Commons and in the House of Lords.

I cannot pretend that even upon this exciting occasion I was exactly nervous, although I was completely unknown. I had never given the slightest evidence, even to myself, that I possessed any gift of public speech; there were at least 800 undergraduates and guests present; and the occasion was undoubtedly to a freshman a very serious one.

Looking back and having regard to my standing, and the standing of our distinguished guest, I cannot doubt that I made an extremely impertinent speech. Sir Wilfrid Lawson, on his accession to the Baronetcy, had inherited a noble cellar, established and maintained by the piety of many excellent and thoughtful predecessors. He flung it into the gutter, regarding all that it contained as a vile and dangerous instrument of corruption. In language of generous indignation I branded this unspeakable act. I recalled the generous burgundies, the delicate clarets, the stimulating champagnes, the warm and ancient brandies, which had perished in this insensate outrage. And I inflamed the honest resentment of a youth, to most of whom these beverages were extremely rare, by my reproaches upon their cruel and uneconomic dissipation. My views upon this subject have altered little since the date of my speech in the year 1891; nor have I any reason to suppose that I could express my indignation with greater powers of sarcasm than I was the master of thirty-two years ago.

I have, I hope, already in the first of these articles sufficiently disarmed the charge of egotism or conceit which might be founded upon production of a series of memories such as this, in which

I recall many events as interesting landmarks in my life. But it is so long ago (and so much has happened since) that I shall not be deterred from quoting the criticisms on my speech which appeared a week later in the two principal University papers, the *Oxford Magazine* and the *Isis*.

The *Oxford Magazine* said: "It is long indeed since the house has listened to a maiden speech of such power, conciseness, and brilliancy." And the *Isis* said: "The speech of the evening, with all respect to our guest, was the amazingly vivacious and brilliant performance of Mr. F. E. Smith, the Wadham freshman."

For myself, I say quite plainly that the success of that evening marked an epoch in my life. I was thereafter satisfied that I possessed a power of speech which, if sustained and developed, must lead me, along one path or another, to some degree of eminence in the State. I did not, I hope, make the mistake of supposing that rhetoric alone could open the golden gates of success. But I had at least become certain that, if I could make myself the master of solid knowledge, I should not be found lacking in the task of its expression and elucidation.

Let me, therefore, before I part from my purpose, which is to offer advice to young men

in the same position as I was then, impress upon them most strongly that they must not make the Union everything, or exaggerate the value of a glib facility in speech. No rhetoric can be valuable which is not supported by study and reinforced by knowledge. No sensible undergraduate, therefore, will sacrifice his prospects in the Schools for his prospects at the Union. Rather should both march hand in hand, so that the acquisition of knowledge should always be matched by the growing power of expressing it in lucid, intelligible, and persuasive speech.

If this very necessary caution is borne in mind, no one, I am sure, who reads this will ever in after-life regret that he has followed the advice which I here so confidently offer. Nor is it limited to those who have the advantage of studying at our Universities old or new ; I suppose that every considerable town or centre of population has a debating society of some kind. Every cultivated man should be ashamed of being unable to express himself coherently and intelligibly in public as in private speech.

It is indeed a fine thing "to witch the world with noble horsemanship." But it is finer far to witch it by noble oratory harnessed to noble

purpose. Not all can compass this result ; but all can try.

3. MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN AND TARIFF REFORM

I had myself, even as a young man at Oxford, become convinced that a Free Trade system was not economically advantageous to a nation which had to live its life in a Protectionist world. The controversy before the War was obviously not a very easy one : for our immense material prosperity and our accumulated wealth furnished powerful arguments in favour of the existing fiscal system ; but none the less, rightly or wrongly, a little influenced I think by the arguments of Disraeli but still not without some independent reflection, I had convinced myself, while still a boy at Oxford, that it was not possible for a Free Trade country to compete over an indefinite period of time with those who enjoyed our market and denied us theirs. I remember well involving myself in considerable discredit by a paper which I wrote upon this subject in the year 1892. In it I established some small controversial advantage by calling attention to the predictions, so ludicrously falsified by the event, which had been so confidently made by Cobden

and Bright. These two great men, unlike their fluid followers, were rigidly consistent. They were indeed fanatics. They looked at the world through the spectacles of economics. But unfortunately, the world never has been governed, and never will be governed, by professors of economics. Economics is a dismal and it is also a purely empirical science, if indeed it can be called a science at all. Its professors grope more faithfully, but with less certainty, towards the light (or towards the dark) than the titular exponents of any other branch of human learning.

We might perhaps have expected that the professors of political economy would have afforded the world some warning of the dance to death which was to mark the hectic dawn of European exchanges. I cannot recall myself one useful warning which any doctrinaire writer addressed to his countrymen upon this technical but immensely important subject at a moment when his counsel might have been useful.

The intervention of the War has made it almost impossible, and certainly useless, to pursue the old controversies in the old terms. It is sufficient to say that, even if the War had not taken place at all, many arguments could be alleged in favour of the view that our Protectionist rivals,

basing themselves upon a creed which would have made Cobden gnash impotent teeth, would have wrenched from us our supremacy in trade.

Holding even before the War, and at a time when they were very unfashionable, the views which I have indicated ; repelling (as I had done) the extreme Free Trade argument at a moment when Mr. Joseph Chamberlain would undoubtedly have supported it ; it may easily be supposed that I was one of the earliest recruits who rallied in the year 1904 to his standard.

Mr. Chamberlain, of course, made one fatal mistake ; and one which I believe (though I am not certain of this) he afterwards admitted. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the time when Mr. Chamberlain returned from his arduous tour in South Africa, was Mr. Ritchie, a dull, second-rate man, who had no real position either in the Cabinet, the House of Commons, or the country. But he was an inveterate Free Trader. He would be. There was in existence at the moment of Mr. Chamberlain's return a duty on corn, which had been generally accepted by the country, and which would have sufficed as a basis for Mr. Chamberlain's proposals. As long, indeed, as it existed, it supplied a complete antidote and corrective to the traditional and passionate

Liberal falsehoods in relation to dear food. Mr. Ritchie insisted in Cabinet upon the withdrawal of a duty to which no one seriously objected, but which carried with it the whole germ and promise of the Tariff Reform proposal. Had Mr. Ritchie resigned at that moment, not a ripple would have been caused upon the political wave. He was utterly unimportant; and no one would have even remembered three months afterwards that he had ever been Chancellor of the Exchequer. No one remembers it now; except by reason of that which, quite unnecessarily, he was allowed to do. Mr. Chamberlain, on the other hand, at that moment was a political figure of the utmost consequence. No Prime Minister could have hesitated, if the choice had been presented to him, of choosing between Mr. Chamberlain or Mr. Ritchie. The difference was between Pitt and Addington, between London and Paddington. But Mr. Chamberlain, I think, at almost the unhappiest moment of his career, perhaps suffering a little from the lassitude induced by his laborious efforts in South Africa, did not meet the challenge as I thought he ought to have done, having regard to the schemes which he had already formed. He did not, in other words, elect to fight at a moment when his decision must

have been accepted, and his challenge conceded. He allowed Mr. Ritchie to withdraw the duty on corn ; and, by doing so, armed the Liberal Party with a characteristically dishonest pretext : that Tariff Reform must increase the price of the people's food.

Mr. Chamberlain undertook in his seventieth year an unforgettable campaign. But he paid almost the only forfeit which he ever paid in his life to indolence ; perhaps it should be said, to an understandable fatigue. Incredible as was his energy, lucid as was his power of exposition, undaunted his will-power, it became evident that even he had overrated his strength. His campaign might have hoped for happier results had he been assaulting a Liberal Government in a moment of weakness. But unhappily for him and for his efforts, it began in a moment of reactions when everything conspired to make the Conservative Government detestable.

Nor could he himself be judged entirely blameless for this reaction. At the election which became known as the " Khaki Election " he had, speaking with high authority, and in plain language, announced that the only business of a new Parliament would be or ought to be to achieve the peace, and deal with the débris of the war.

The Parliament which came into existence was in reality only authorised and inspired by the country for that purpose. The moment that it set itself to new and highly disputable legislative proposals, it became evident that it was lacking in moral and political validity. Both the Licensing Bill and the Education Bill were admirably conceived. The Liberal Party shrieked at both in partisan rage. It has never indeed been able to alter the fundamental principles of either of these great measures. But nevertheless it had an argumentative case. The verdict of the constituencies had been invited upon a single issue; so invited it should not have been deflected to controversial party issues, however masterly the treatment proposed might be. And from the moment that this Parliament, having disposed of the South African War, addressed itself to most vexed subjects of domestic politics, its doom was certain. The reactions of every war, even of a comparatively small war, are perilous to Governments. Soon these reactions united against the then Conservative Government the most formidable catena of antagonisms with which my experience of political life has made me familiar.

The Taff Vale decision, "Chinese Slavery,"

the Education Act, the Licensing Act—all combined to increase the discredit and instability of the Government. And no scruple in the Liberal Party avoided any argument which might discredit the Government of the day. Nor was the personnel of that Government well chosen to meet Parliamentary assault. Whenever the Conservative Party has been in power for a long period of time it has always been afflicted by an incredible tendency in the direction of nepotism. Young men are neglected ; old and incompetent men, wholly without Parliamentary gifts, are promoted to the highest places in the State. If youth is advanced at all, you may generally identify in one so promoted the son of an aristocrat.

Mr. Chamberlain, therefore, could hardly have chosen a worse moment to launch his campaign. For the only Party on which he could rely to carry it was already stricken and doomed.

But even now, when with our later knowledge we read of his marvellous personal effort in cool retrospect, and realise fully how hopeless it was, we must salute the courage and the inspiration of its prophet.

I was first brought into contact with him in this campaign when he visited Liverpool, I think,

in the early part of 1905. I had never met him before; and was at that time leading a forlorn hope in the Scotland Division of Liverpool. I met him at a luncheon party, given at the Town Hall by the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, my old friend, now Sir Watson Rutherford. I was introduced to him after lunch. And I knew, I think, almost as well as he did, that Tariff Reform was impossible, except from the basis of a tax upon food. But I was most clearly convinced that there was not the slightest chance in existing political circumstances of a tax on food being accepted by the nation. It might easily have been accepted if a reasonable treatment could have been expected from our opponents. Nothing in the history of those opponents (nor in our treatment of them) entitled us to expect the slightest mercy at their hands. And seeing these things, with the confidence of youth (which later experience, I may add, has not greatly shaken) I ventured to say to Mr. Chamberlain, "Cannot you postpone the proposal to tax food until a moment when we are politically stronger? Cannot you in the first place use the Protectionist argument, which has great value in the industrial constituencies, and postpone until we are stronger the full and ultimately indispensable programme?"

I can still see him, smoking a very large cigar, in the banqueting-hall of the Liverpool City Council, looking at me almost with amusement and saying: "My young friend, you have mistaken my purpose. All these matters were deeply considered by me before I conceived and declared my proposals." The snub was complete. My age and standing gave me no choice but acquiescence. Had my age and standing authorised it, I should have pursued the controversy further; for I was completely unconvinced.

In the evening Mr. Chamberlain addressed a great audience of about five thousand at Hengler's Circus. He made an incisive and very closely reasoned speech. But the qualities in that speech which were most valuable detracted a little by their detail of illustration from its superficial attractiveness. At that moment all the Liverpool constituencies except the Scotland Division, where I was Conservative candidate, were held by Unionists. My old friend Sir Archibald Salvidge, now leader of the Conservative Party in Liverpool, professing himself unable to decide the competitive claims of the Liverpool members of Parliament to support Mr. Chamberlain's speech, decided that the opportunity should be given to the only Unionist candidate in the

city who was not a member, and accordingly I was afforded the opportunity, while many willing orators remained silent, of making the second speech after Mr. Chamberlain. Sir Archibald Salvidge has often told me that, while I was speaking, Mr. Chamberlain turned to him and said, "Who is this young fellow? He was arguing with me to-day. Who is he?" Sir Archibald replied, "He is a young barrister, called F. E. Smith, of whom we have a very high opinion in Liverpool." To which Mr. Chamberlain replied, "What seat is he standing for?" Salvidge replied, "The Scotland Division." To which Chamberlain replied, "Well, my advice to you is to get him into a seat which he can win." And when the meeting was over, he came up to me and said, "I have told Salvidge that he must get you a safe seat. You will be returned to Parliament: come up to me in the Lobby of the House of Commons, and recall yourself to my recollection."

I took him at his word eighteen months later. He treated me with the greatest kindness and consideration; and I owed entirely to his intervention the opportunity of making on a very favourable occasion my maiden speech in the House of Commons. All of us who have been

engaged for a long period of years in politics incur great debts to powerful friends and patrons. Let me here, long after he is dead, place on record the deep admiration which I had and have for the lucid intellect, the incisive speech, and the supreme intelligence of Joseph Chamberlain. Let me above all add an expression of gratitude to a great man who, at the very moment of his greatness, held out a helping hand to one who, at that moment, was inconceivably obscure.

4. HOW I ENTERED PARLIAMENT

To every young barrister who has grasped, or sees within his grasp, real success in his profession, there comes a moment when he must decide whether he will adhere closely to the legal side of that profession or whether he will attempt to unite with it a political career. The decision is an extremely grave one, and should be considered and reconsidered. Unless a man has a particular gift for politics, he is surrendering the scanty leisure of a busy professional life without the certain prospect of any return at all. He must live laborious days and tedious nights seeking to persuade a constituency which he may never win. And if, on the other hand, he wins the seat,

he not only has the anxiety and expense of maintaining it, but much of his vacations must be given up either to protracted sessions in the House of Commons or to a series of engagements in his constituency.

Nor can the question of expense be excluded from the accounts. In one way or another, most elections, even under modern conditions, cost nearly £1,000. Nor, again speaking generally, does the £400 a year which is now paid as salary (less income tax) to members defray the charges of an ordinary constituency. Unless, therefore, the rising barrister whom we are attempting to advise has given some distinct evidence of political as distinguished from forensic capacity, he will, on the whole, be well advised to write politics off the slate of his life. Nor does such decision deny to him a very distinguished career. He may, if he be among the elect, become a Judge of the High Court; thence he may be promoted to be a Lord Justice of Appeal; if he be one of the foremost men in his legal generation, he may even become a Law Lord and a Life Peer. So that even for the non-political barrister, if he be a real winner in the legal Derby, a career of extraordinary distinction is open. He may live to make the laws of England; even to administer

justice in the far-flung and complex jurisprudence of the British Empire in virtue of membership of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

But of course such a man misses much. Every intelligent man must take an interest in politics, whether he wishes or not. For politics means only the science of government. And we are, in my judgment, approaching a period in which no man who has the slightest stake in the country will be able to afford himself the luxury of abstinence from politics; and if you are interested in politics, it is, after all, at Westminster that the great game is and must be played. It is there that you may measure yourself, not only with your fellow King's Counsel, but with all the great political gladiators of the day. Parliament, after all, is the microcosm of the talent of Great Britain; and no man of great ambition, conscious of great powers, will willingly throughout his career be excluded from its arena.

And it is of course not less apparent that the most dazzling prizes of the profession fall to those who have proved alike their political and their legal efficiency. Except by strange and infrequently recurring chances, no man becomes Lord Chancellor who has not sat in the House of Commons.

The Lord Chief Justice of England, except by the same kind of accident, is always one who has passed through the Parliamentary hurly-burly. And the Law Officers of the Crown, with all the dazzling possibilities which their offices afford, must from the very nature of their duties find seats in the House of Commons.

It may, therefore, be confidently predicted that the lure of Parliament will always make an irresistible appeal to the most adventurous and gifted members of the legal profession. But nevertheless, as I have already indicated, unless their debating and political capacity marches in equal step with their adventurous qualities, they may easily abandon the substance for an elusive shadow, drawing no prize, after years of expenditure and disillusionment, from the political lucky-bag.

I myself, whether I proved right or wrong, had irrevocably made up my mind that the moment my position at the Bar justified it, I would try my hand at the Parliamentary game. My success at the Junior Bar at Liverpool had been very rapid. For when I first joined the Northern Circuit and took chambers at Liverpool, the juniors with whom I was brought into competition were as formidable, and were to prove as

brilliantly successful, as any at that moment to be found among the Bar of London, in the Temple. Mr. Leslie Scott, K.C., afterwards Solicitor-General, Mr. Justice Greer, Mr. Justice Rigby Swift, Mr. A. G. Steel, K.C., Mr. Collingwood Hope, K.C., Judge Tobin, Judge Thomas, Judge Maxwell, Mr. Greaves Lord, K.C., Mr. Ross Brown, K.C., and many others who have since reached high professional distinction, were actually practising in Liverpool chambers when I joined the local Bar. Nor was the Bar of Manchester, with which one was constantly brought into competition, very much inferior. But the support of many powerful clients, none of whom I had known when I went to Liverpool, afforded me the opportunity of an unusually swift success. Among these I would particularly mention the late Mr. George Harley, of the celebrated firm of Simpson and North; Sir Joseph Hood, M.P., now of the British-America Tobacco Company; Mr. Pearce, Deputy Town Clerk of Liverpool; and last, but in some ways most important of all, my lifelong supporter and friend, the late Sir Robert Houston. And I must not omit from this list Lord Wavertree, who directed to my chambers a constant stream of licensing business at a time when the volume of work in

that branch of legal administration was probably greater, and more remunerative, than it had ever been before or since.

If it interests any one to learn the exact financial results of my first years of practice, there is no reason, at my time of life, why the figures should be withheld. In my first year I made £120; in the second year, £1,200; in my third year, £3,100; in my fourth year, £4,200; in my fifth year, £5,150; and in my sixth year, just over £6,000. These figures in pre-War days, and with no real taxation to pay, were very substantial, and I should doubt whether within so short a period of time they have been exceeded by anyone who commenced his legal life without the slightest real influence behind him. At any rate, they seemed to justify me in an unusually early attempt, even as a junior, to enter Parliament. It is not easy, particularly on the Unionist side, for a young man without influence to obtain a seat which there is a reasonable prospect of winning, and it is especially difficult when everything is going wrong with the Conservative Party, so that it has become certain that they must lose almost fifty per cent. of their seats when an election takes place. Such was the situation in 1904, when I was searching for a constituency.

All the safe Liverpool seats were already held by others.

I was told that I must win my spurs by fighting my old friend Mr. T. P. O'Connor, who was in a secure and evidently indisputable position in the Scotland Division of Liverpool. No other avenue presented itself; and though I knew that I had not the slightest chance of success, it appeared to me to be worth while to pick up a forlorn hope. And so for six months I addressed meetings, usually very much interrupted, in this Nationalist stronghold. But fate was to be kind to me. The Walton Division of Liverpool, far the largest constituency in the whole city, was then held by Mr. Stock. Though a most amiable, worthy, and public-spirited representative, he was not possessed of controversial gifts upon the platform, or indeed elsewhere, of a very high order. And as the fateful days of 1906 approached more closely it became increasingly evident that a sterner fight awaited the Conservatives of Walton than any by which they had been previously confronted. I did not know how the matter was ultimately to be adjusted; but I shall not soon forget the occasion upon which my old friend Mr. Edwin Berry, a very powerful member of the Executive Association in the constituency, first approached

me with the suggestion that I might take the place of Mr. Stock. His influence was very great with the Selection Committee; his judgment was very good; and I never doubted that his influence would prove decisive, especially when reinforced by the general realisation that in the débâcle which impended no one but a very strong fighting candidate could save the seat.

I knew, of course, how much it meant to me, not merely that I should enter the House of Commons young, but that I should enter it in opposition. And it was already evident to me that the Conservative Party would not only be in opposition, but that it would constitute an Opposition almost negligible in numbers. Provided, then, that I could become a member of that Opposition, it was quite certain that if I exhibited the necessary ability, a political future of no small distinction was assured. And I felt certain that I did possess that ability. You can easily conceive, then, the suspense and anxiety with which, in an ante-room, I awaited the decision of the Committee after I had addressed them for an hour upon the political situation.

The suspense was not intolerably protracted, and in ten minutes it was announced that I had

been selected as the Conservative candidate for the Walton Division of Liverpool.

This selection undoubtedly formed the principal milestone in my life ; thereafter began nine months of the most strenuous work of my career. And I desire, twenty years afterwards, to place on record my deep debt of gratitude to those who selected me when an obscure man and by doing so first placed my feet upon the political ladder. I can hardly recall, even to-day, without emotion, the devoted men and women who canvassed for me on bitter winter evenings. I have often reflected how much they did for me, and how little, though I tried hard enough, I was able to do for them. If these words, written so long afterwards, should happen to meet the eye of any man or woman who supported and worked for me then, I hope that he or she will accept an expression of genuine gratitude as warm as it may be belated.

But the work was strenuous enough. I held two or three meetings a night, and when the in-door meetings were concluded, I made it my invariable practice to go out in a wagonette with a loud-sounding bell, and with Dr. Richardson, my combative and indefatigable chairman, to hold open-air meetings in vacant spaces of the

constituency. The task, of course, was always very uphill. We had to fight, in a constituency where there were many Welsh voters, the unpopular but very statesmanlike Education Act. We had to fight the infamous Chinese Slavery cry which branded the Liberal Party with so much indelible infamy. We had to fight against the persistent falsehood with which that Party exploited the cry of "Dear Food!"; and, most formidable of all, we had to fight with the fact that the country was thoroughly tired of us, of our policy, and of everything about us, and was irresistibly determined to make a change.

And so, week after week and month after month, I waged an uphill fight, I may, perhaps, after so long a period of time, be allowed to say that I did it myself. For it did not appear to me to be particularly helpful in a very large artisan constituency to rely upon imported speakers. The electors in Walton wanted to know, not what others were able to say to them, but what their candidate said. And accordingly, when I held—and I frequently did—three meetings a night, the proceedings consisted of a short speech from the chairman and a more elaborate argument from the candidate,

As the contest approached more closely, the

elements which made for despondency increased. Our party managers in Lancashire were out-manceuvred; so that it was arranged that the Manchester and Salford election should take place on Saturday, whereas the Liverpool elections were postponed till Monday. On Saturday night we had the encouragement of learning that a landslide was in progress; and that every Manchester and Salford seat, including that of Mr. Arthur Balfour, had been lost. Similar returns came from all over the country. The occasion seemed desperate enough. All that could be done was to keep up the appearance of a good heart, however far it lagged behind reality. And accordingly, on Monday morning every hoarding in the constituency of Walton which I could control or purchase was adorned by a gigantic poster, on which the impudent legend ran: "*Is Balfour Out? Then all the more reason for putting Smith in.*"

And then the hectic day which probably was to decide my whole career began its rain-sodden course. In those days there were few motors, and we were dependent in the main upon horse-drawn vehicles. It was no occasion for half-measures; and I sent from my own stables eight hunters belonging to myself and my wife, hardly

one of which had ever been in harness until a week before. Few indeed of the voters could have realised the risks that they were running. But it is a singular coincidence that the vehicles which they erratically propelled conveyed in the aggregate almost the exact number of the majority by which I was elected.

At 11.30 p.m. it was announced that I had been elected member of Parliament for the Walton Division of Liverpool by a majority of about 750. Having regard to the fact that the constituency consisted of eighteen thousand electors, and that I had been opposing a Liberal candidate who until a few days before the election was absent from the constituency, the success cannot be considered dazzling; but it must be measured by the conditions of the day, and it sufficed.

This election was incomparably the greatest milestone which I ever had passed—or ever was destined to pass—in my career. I was at least to be afforded the chance of measuring myself with those who were to determine the fortunes of the country.

5. MY CAREER IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

The House of Commons is, as almost everyone knows, a most extraordinary place, with a dis-

tinctive atmosphere wholly unlike that of any other assembly. "That House," a wise man once said, "has corporately more intelligence, more humour, and more humanity than any individual member of it." It is evident, therefore, that no one, whatever success he has met with outside it, can be sure that that success will be repeated in an atmosphere so novel and so incalculable. Many a hero of the hustings, whose dazzling periods have been cheered to the echo by delighted supporters discerning in him a new Disraeli, has retired with public discomfiture from the arena of Parliamentary competition.

When I was a young man, two of the most effective speakers upon the platform for the Conservative Party were the late Dr. Rentoul and the late Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett. Each of these orators travelled all over England, rendering incalculable service to the Unionist Party. The valuation of party speakers at Headquarters is commonly measured in terms of the audience whom they can actually collect and successfully address. Each of these speakers was a five-thousand audience man ; or in the rare event that a hall could be found capable of accommodating ten thousand, each was fully equal to the occasion. Dr. Rentoul was, in my opinion, the more effec-

tive of the two, perhaps because he had greater reserve power, and did not fling everything, body and voice alike, into a frenzied rhetorical effort as completely as Sir Ellis. I heard both these speakers as a boy, in successive years, at the same theatre, the Metropole at Birkenhead, where I suppose special efforts were being made, because the seat, then held by the present Earl of Albemarle (formerly Viscount Bury), was considered not without reason to be in some small danger. I was at the time a freshman at Oxford, vitally interested in the subject of oratory, and very anxious to discern the secrets which might contribute to its mastery. I was, of course, at an impressionable age; but I nevertheless believe that even then I had a critical faculty in such matters not altogether to be despised. Dr. Rentoul had a most imposing presence, a fine voice, an extraordinarily valuable quality of platform humour, and an extremely composed manner. He certainly made one of the best platform speeches which I have ever heard. His future engagements were published in the Liverpool papers. His next meeting was at Warrington. You may judge of the impression which he had made upon me when I tell you that I took the trouble to obtain the Warring-

ton paper in order that I might read his speech. You may equally judge of the impression made upon me when I tell you that I, who never made the same speech twice in my life, read verbatim, to the extent of four and a half columns, the oration which I had applauded with so much enthusiasm at the Birkenhead Theatre. Neither Dr. Rentoul nor Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett ever spoke with the slightest success in the House of Commons ; indeed, it is no harsh judgment to say of both that they were dismal failures in that Assembly.

A similar illustration was furnished by the case of Sir George Doughty, for so long the Conservative member for Grimsby. He was a short, stout, rosy little man ; with a humorous, even a whimsical expression. His voice was very powerful ; his method of speech none the less effective because it was extremely homely. The niceties and the details of contemporary political controversy he was very content to leave to others ; but with a broad brush he swept over the political canvas of the moment. He projected over the footlights the personality of a shrewd and honest man who was fortunate enough to have a good case ; and competent, in his unsophisticated way, to make it plain to others.

It must, I think, be clearly recognised that no aspirant to Parliamentary success must found excessive hopes upon his platform triumphs. Other qualities, and these far more important, are requisite. Mere rhetoric in Parliament is entirely useless. It really passed away with William Pitt. Nor is the list of surprising failures exhausted by the number of those who have been the darlings of great audiences, but have left Westminster cold and, even worse, bored. Many a great lawyer who has held juries spellbound by his eloquence, or even retained the respectful attention of the House of Lords in its judicial capacity by an intellectual argument, sometimes lasting for days, has failed to make the slightest impression upon the House of Commons. The golden-tongued Erskine, the greatest of advocates ever produced by the English Bar, was a failure in the House of Commons, and a failure in the House of Lords. So dazzling was his reputation that when he rose to make his maiden speech, the great William Pitt made special arrangements to be present and, if necessary, to reply to him. He listened for ten minutes and then left the front bench with the decisive observation : " This man is no good here."

The same humiliating experience was to await

him who probably, after Erskine, was the most imperious advocate whom the English Bar has produced—Charles Russell. His oratory in its own forensic and jury atmosphere was supreme. But his rhetoric, though dominating in utterance and inspired by a profound knowledge of human nature, was always jejune, and often cheap, in its verbal exposition. And he too, though he became Attorney-General, must be pronounced to have been an unutterable Parliamentary failure. In an almost frenzied attempt to obtain political audiences who would listen to him with favour, he undertook in the middle of his overwhelming legal labours laborious provincial tours into remote towns. The personality of Lord Reading—whom the Bar still affectionately recalls as Rufus Isaacs—was far more charming than that of Charles Russell. His subtlety was greater, his tact altogether superior, if his personality was less dominating. But even he never attained to Parliamentary success. It appears hopeless to give explanation ; one can only indeed record a relentless and unappealable verdict. You succeed or you fail ; and that is the end of the matter.

Enough has, I hope, been said to make it plain that hardly anyone is so highly gifted rhetorically

that he may dare to enter Parliament with a confident expectation of meeting with success of the highest order. A secondary or at least tertiary measure of success is, of course, always within the grasp of laborious men, innocent of vanity, who will take the kind of opportunity which is suited to their particular capacities, and present to the House of Commons concise and carefully considered arguments upon some subject with which they are specially acquainted. But we are dealing at the moment with a higher and a more ambitious claim.

Some believe that that recent and menacing incursion into the Mother of Parliaments of men who have affected to despise alike its history and its traditions will alter that history and sap those traditions. I do not believe it. The House of Commons will destroy (unless it is itself destroyed) those who attempt to destroy it. Nor is this surprising. For you cannot influence the House of Commons except by adopting the weapons which it recognises, and to which it assigns a victorious force ; so that, paradoxically enough, he who would conquer it must first equip himself by the only gifts which this Assembly recognises ; and by the time that he has attained consummate mastery of those gifts, he has himself become

a House of Commons man, and no longer aspires to destroy an Assembly by virtue of which he himself has become great.

No one can be counted a really great speaker who is not at once infinitely resourceful, diversified, and adaptable. For of oratory there are many illustrations; indeed, a man may well be a capable orator who has attained to complete mastery over any one of the manifold possible expressions of rhetorical power. There is the platform speaker. There is the forensic speaker. There is the after-dinner speaker. There is the House of Commons speaker. There is the House of Lords speaker. I may, I believe, claim to have exhibited some slight degree of competency in every one of these types of rhetoric. If the claim be not excessive—and I have, I hope, already excused myself from the obvious charge of egotism—my advice may be of some assistance to those who are about to enter the House of Commons.

Oratory is in part a natural, in part an acquired gift. In so far as it is natural its inspiration cannot be supplied by effort or study. But it is almost incredible how little of it, and in how few cases it is explained by the presence of natural genius. Men still record indeed how

Demosthenes remedied an imperfect articulation by speaking on the sea-shore with pebbles in his mouth. I have often wondered what was the infirmity which required a treatment so singular. But the moral of the story is unimpaired ; there is hardly an infirmity in speech which cannot be cured by the man who is determined to become an effective speaker. Mr. Winston Churchill is affected by a kind of lisp or stammer which in the case of an ordinary man might from the very first have excluded him from the circle of high Parliamentary competition. But upon this point Mr. Lloyd George once made a very shrewd observation to me. He said : " Watch Winston's stammer closely ; note the occasions upon which he is affected by it ; you will nearly always find that he is specially liable to it when he has something particularly good to say."

Let me, however, add a few words on the subject to which I suppose I have given more study than to any other save that of the law. Many qualities are requisite for him who would speak well in a critical assembly. First, he must know exactly that which he wishes to say. Secondly, he must pay his audience the compliment of preparing his argument closely enough to make it certain that he can deliver his message with what

the Romans call "concinnity." Thirdly, he must give to his argument the most forcible and even epigrammatic expression which is within his compass. Fourthly, he must cultivate wit and irony.

To some men these qualities come more easily than to others. But a student of rhetoric who studies Gibbon conscientiously will acquire some conception, however dim, of the elements which constitute superb irony ; and examples of wit are manifold, easy to appreciate, however difficult to imitate. No man will ever be a great speaker who has not read widely and constantly of great books. This does not mean that he must be a master of the classic authors of Greece and Rome ; though he will be a more widely effective and literary speaker if he is. But Bright—that consummate exponent of English spoken rhetoric—acquired his superb mastery of the noble English language in the undefiled wells of the Bible and of Shakespeare. I should suppose that fewer Latin words were used in the speeches of John Bright than in those of any great orator who has ever addressed the House of Commons ; and if I wished to take two contrasted illustrations of great lords of the English speech who approached it with strongly contrasted education and pre-

judice, I should select Dr. Johnson and Mr. Bright.

After these somewhat pretentious generalities, I feel that it is somewhat of an anticlimax to decline into a drab modern period and still more to recur to my own incursion into the House of Commons. I had the good fortune to enter it when my party was not only a small, but a dispirited opposition. We were, indeed, only one hundred and fifty strong. Exercising no inconsiderable self-control, I did not attempt to address the House for many weeks, although more than one occasion arose upon which I was tempted to do so.

At last an opportunity offered which seemed to me altogether favourable. Sir James Kitson, a Liberal Yorkshire member, moved a resolution in a conventional and extremely dull speech recording the satisfaction of the House that the country had recorded a verdict in favour of Free Trade. The debate was limited to a single day. The House was crowded almost beyond human memory for the whole of the day; and everybody, or almost everybody, desired to speak. It was extremely difficult to obtain an opportunity of taking part in the debate. I asked Mr. Joseph Chamberlain (with whom, as explained in an

earlier page, I had established some intimacy) whether he would use his influence with Mr. Speaker in order that I might be called upon. He most generously undertook this task; and returned with the message that I should be called at the best hour in all the debate, at 10 o'clock: and he added the words: "This is the chance of your life, my friend; see that you use it." By an interesting coincidence the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Philip Snowden, universally admitted at that time to be the first platform speaker of the Socialist Party, made his maiden speech immediately in front of me. It was fairly well received, but it was not of extraordinary merit; and did not make it certain that he would develop the high Parliamentary qualities which he has since disclosed. When I rose to speak, the House was densely crowded. Not one in twenty had the slightest idea who I was. I had made up my mind that I would try a dazzling gamble. It seemed to me that my party was almost in despair. Never in its history had it sustained such a disaster at the polls. The swollen insolence and bad Parliamentary manners of the mammoth majority, which overflowed over four-fifths of the available sitting space, seemed to me to have asserted a depressing—

almost a cowing—effect upon the tiny Conservative minority. I judged the occasion, therefore, inopportune for a very scientific or economic examination of the subject of debate. There was, after all, plenty of time for that. But I asked for no indulgence because I was making a maiden speech. The request for indulgence seemed to me could only come gracefully from the lips which made a modest appeal, couched in uncontroversial language, and I had not it in my mind to make such an appeal. I spoke for sixty-five minutes, which I believe to be a record for a maiden speech; and I spoke with a degree of calculated insolence and sustained invective which I am quite sure has never been attempted before or since by one who addressed the House of Commons for the first time. As I drove down to the House of Commons with my wife, I said, “I shall either make a brilliant success or a greater failure than that of Disraeli.” Before I sat down it was obvious that it was a *tour de force*; the speech had at least, whatever its real merits, been a great success. How great a success I did not realise until I read the papers next day at Chester. For I had to journey down by midnight train to argue a complicated case of Extraordinary Traffic against the present Lord

Justice Elton Banks at Chester. But I carried with me into my sleeping-berth on that train the words of Mr. Chamberlain, who sat immediately in front of me while I spoke: "Very good, but you made one great mistake." A little surprised (for I was not conscious of any mistake), I said: "What was that?" He replied, "You put far too many good things in one speech."

I did not think that it was for me to bandy compliments with Mr. Joseph Chamberlain.

6. THE LORD CHANCELLORSHIP

On my recall from France in May 1915, when the first Coalition Government was formed, I became Solicitor-General, the present Lord Carson being Attorney. A few months afterwards he resigned his office upon the ground that Serbia had been unnecessarily abandoned by the Allies, and left to a cruel and, in his view, an avoidable fate. But I am sure that the reason which really determined his decision was that he had convinced himself that the whole conduct of the War was languid and spasmodic, wholly lacking in the grip and vigour which the cruel emergencies of the day required.

However this may be, he resigned; and I became

Attorney-General, with a seat in the Cabinet. Thereafter, until the Coalition Government was destroyed at the Carlton Club nearly eight years later, I must accept, with the reservations I hereafter explain, my full responsibility for all that was done and all that was decided. This admission is subject to one reservation only: that after the second Coalition Government, of which Mr. Lloyd George became head, was formed, the real and absolute direction of affairs passed into the hands of the War Cabinet. The larger Cabinet survived indeed in name. But it survived in nothing else. In the clash of arms, full Cabinet responsibility in the old sense disappeared. In fact, the name of Cabinet Minister for those who were not members of the War Cabinet became a kind of anachronism, somewhat like the almost ceremonial title of Privy Councillor. This state of affairs lasted until, and included, both the Armistice and the Treaty of Versailles period. During the whole of this time the influence of Mr. Lloyd George was supreme and predominant. No one in England has, in my recollection of English history, wielded such authority with so little reference to anyone else, since the days of Chatham in his moments of imperious triumph; or perhaps those of Disraeli, who brought

“Peace with Honour” from the Congress of Berlin.

It is fashionable now, in the long and cold disillusionments by which we are confronted, to disparage the Treaty and to belittle its authors. But I think that history will recognise more fully the difficulties by which our negotiators were confronted, arising partly out of the anomalous position which President Wilson occupied; and partly out of the bewildering maze from which those who were so profoundly stricken could hardly compass a successful issue.

I do not wish to escape the responsibility which any Minister who continued to be a Minister must accept for this period, and for all that happened in this period. But it is important constitutionally to make it plain where the actual authority and responsibility resided in these very critical years. Some months after the Armistice Election the full Cabinet was re-collected, assuming, in accordance with the old precedent, the supreme control over affairs; and the War period, with its constitutional convulsions and anomalies, came to a definite end.

I contested the Walton Division once again in the Armistice Election, being at that time Attorney-General, and not having the slightest

desire to change my office. I had for four years been at the head of the profession to which I had upon the whole devoted most of my active and working life. It had been my duty to master the whole complicated code of emergency legislation which, in many important departments of life, superseded the common law of England. I had for four years been responsible for the conduct of prize business at a time when we had to accommodate ourselves to greater innovations and larger developments than even in the spacious days of Lord Stowell. I neither expected nor was prepared to exchange an office of such high importance and emolument for any other. Of the emolument, indeed, little need be said. I myself, Lord Cave, who was my first Solicitor-General, and Lord Hewart, who was my second, voluntarily deprived ourselves of £5,000 a year of our salaries as a contribution to the necessities of the time. Sir John Simon, who was Attorney-General before the War, and the present Lord Chief Justice of England, who respectively preceded and succeeded me in my office, each made more than £20,000 a year. I could reasonably and almost indefinitely look forward to making such an income as Attorney-General; and I shall not, I believe, be accused of egotism if I claim

that, in private practice, I could very easily and very considerably have exceeded it.

But when the new Government was constituted after what I have called the Armistice Election, my mind was made up upon one point. Sir Edward Carson, Sir John Simon, and Sir Rufus Isaacs had all occupied the position of Attorney-General, and had all been Cabinet Ministers. I had myself been Attorney-General for four years, holding Cabinet rank ; though, as I had made it plain, for a part of this period full Cabinet responsibility was suspended. I was not prepared—and upon this point I had definitely made up my mind—to continue in the office of Attorney-General unless I was given a seat in the Cabinet. This decision was not founded upon the merits of the question whether the Attorney-General ought to sit in the Cabinet at all. It was founded upon the fact that, wisely or unwisely, a change had been made in this respect ; and I was not prepared to acquiesce in so definite a decline in my political position as removal from the Cabinet, of which I had so long been a member, would have involved.

The argument against the inclusion of the Attorney-General in the Cabinet is very strong. This Minister has many important judicial func-

tions to discharge. He decides, for instance, judicially, and not ministerially, whether a prosecution is proper and ought to be directed. In such matters, the Public Prosecutor is, in fact, merely his servant. Similarly he must decide, judicially, and not ministerially, whether he will enter a *nolle prosequi*, which brings to an end a prosecution which has already been commenced. It is of vital importance that he should never be influenced, or should even appear to be influenced, by political colleagues in matters in relation to which he has a solemn, an individual, and a judicial responsibility. It is my considered opinion that it is wiser, from the constitutional point of view, that the Attorney-General should not be in the Cabinet ; though it must always be irritating to the holder of that position to see so many men of inferior intellectual calibre enjoying the prestige of Cabinet rank, and the intimate knowledge of official secrets which membership of the Cabinet brings with it.

The history of the business is not without interest. When Lord Loreburn's health rendered it impossible that he should continue to discharge the arduous duties of the Chancellor, Sir Rufus Isaacs was Attorney-General. A Roman Catholic is debarred by statute from becoming Lord

High Chancellor of Great Britain. A Jew is not so debarred; but obvious inconveniences and even indelicacies would follow if a member of that persuasion were called upon to administer the very important ecclesiastical patronage which the Lord Chancellor must distribute. And furthermore, Mr. Asquith was deeply committed to the present Lord Haldane. These two old friends, side by side with Sir Edward Grey, had struggled in vain against the Chancellorship of Lord Loreburn. They were foiled by the pawky determination of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, but I cannot doubt that Asquith has always determined that if the Woolsack ever fell in his gift, it should go to Haldane. On the other hand, intimate ties of personal friendship bound him to Rufus Isaacs. In this dilemma he decided that Haldane should become Lord Chancellor; but that Rufus Isaacs should be afforded the unprecedented solace of becoming a Cabinet Minister while he was still Attorney-General. It was, of course, elaborately proclaimed that the appointment was not to be a precedent. This meant nothing. It became a precedent. Everyone knew it must become a precedent. Sir John Simon and Sir Edward Carson after him were made Cabinet Ministers. So was I. And accord-

ingly, rightly or wrongly, I had made up my mind that, if I were to remain Attorney-General, it should be strictly upon the condition that I retained my position in the reconstituted Cabinet.

And accordingly, when in the month of January I was summoned to No. 10 Downing Street by Mr. Lloyd George, I met his observation: "I am able to offer you your old office as Attorney-General," with the question: "How about my seat in the Cabinet?" To which Mr. Lloyd George replied, "That will be more difficult, because there is a strong feeling that the numbers of the Cabinet must be greatly reduced." I made it quite plain, almost in a sentence, that nothing would induce me to accept the office of Attorney-General upon this condition. And I added that I was in full sympathy with the Government, but that I was perfectly prepared to resume my practice at the Bar; and that I was sure I should be able to give him independent support from the back benches. As quick as lightning the Prime Minister retorted, "How about the Woolsack?" It is literally true that at that time it had never even occurred to me to bring to an end my membership of the House of Commons. When Lord Finlay became Lord Chancellor, at a time when, as Attorney-General,

I was fully entitled to demand that my claims to that office should at least be considered, I most expressly made it known that I was not a candidate for this distinguished office. The decision indeed is, and always must be, an immensely grave one for any man who has the capacity for earning one of the great incomes of the Bar, and who has established a considerable position in the House of Commons. Mrs. Brougham wrote to her son Henry, bitterly remonstrating with him when he accepted the Woolsack. The genius of Erskine lingered only as a pale memory when once he passed to the cold shades of the Upper House. The salary of Lord Chancellor is indeed £10,000 a year; but he is involved in much ceremonial expenditure, so that in these days of high taxation the emolument is relatively small, and incommensurate with the dignity and the greatness of the office. The pension, which is invariably, though not as a matter of obligation, earned by judicial service whenever it is desired, is only £5,000 a year.

It will be evident that the decision proposed to me so suddenly and so unexpectedly by Mr. Lloyd George was a very grave one. Nor did he diminish its gravity by informing me that he must have my answer by ten o'clock on the

following morning, as it was necessary to give the King at that hour the names of his leading colleagues, including, of course, that of the Lord Chancellor. My wife was in the country; it was impossible, without disclosing what must not be disclosed, to communicate with her by telegram; and I had accordingly to take the decision for myself. I promised the Prime Minister to breakfast with him on the following morning, and to give him my answer at this melancholy meal. I spent most of that night in debating the matter in my mind. I had not reached a complete decision when I arrived at No. 10 Downing Street. Winston Churchill was breakfasting there also. He had hitherto shown himself inflexibly opposed to any proposal that I should leave the House of Commons. But after ten minutes' discussion, before our arrival was announced, he greatly weakened. I suppose that I was hardly conscious of having reached a conclusion. I had nevertheless groped my way to one in the long hours the previous night. At any rate, I left the breakfast table on that morning with the knowledge that I was to become Lord Chancellor.

I am not unwilling to recall, having held office for four years, and having sat in judgment as an

ex-Lord Chancellor for four years more, the words which I used at a dinner given to me by the Liverpool Conservative Club to congratulate me upon having become Lord High Chancellor, I believe at an age younger than any save Jeffreys and Thurlow, of whom I say no more in this place. I said: "I approach the discharge of the high duties which await me in a spirit of anxious solicitude; but not, believe me, in one of morbid self-distrust."

It should, I think, be added that I could not, and would not, in justice to my family, have confronted the great change in fortune which awaited me, even at the moment, and still more that which must follow when I was reduced to the pension of an ex-Lord Chancellor, if I had not confidently believed that I had in my pen an instrument which would considerably supplement an income so much declined.

I have often speculated since, as all of us have the habit of doing when great decisions have been taken, as to whether I was right or whether I was wrong. I cut myself adrift to some extent from the direct democratic life of the country. I left the House of Commons, which I believe I had not ceased to interest and where there was much to attract me. I became a Peer, and saddled my

only son with an hereditary responsibility against most of my own desires and intuitions. But I am not at all sure—I cannot put it higher—that in the same circumstances I should not take the same decision. And at any rate I still have an interesting—I hope not a useless—life, and I can say with Dryden after Horace :

“Not Heaven itself upon the Past has power ;
What has been has been ; and I’ve had my hour ! ”

XVIII

EMPIRE DEVELOPMENT

I

THE populations of Great Britain are congested. The vast spaces beyond her boundaries, which own her sway with pride, are crying out for men and women and families. In this essay I shall endeavour to deal with facts, ideas, conceptions, and plans directly connected with Empire settlement. These projects are of dimensions so great—in essence they are so inspiring—that they might well induce in poet or prophet the feelings which create, in the multitude, enthusiasm for a cause. I shall try to make vital the questions involved by relating them specifically to the life of to-day.

All the outlying parts of the Empire look to Britain for a lead. I am writing this survey with especial reference to the Dominion of Canada, for it may be said that the problem of Empire settlement affects Canada more acutely, but more favourably, than any other amongst our self-governing possessions. It can be truthfully said

that Britain's necessity is Canada's opportunity. I have been in Canada, to my own great advantage and delight. I have witnessed the changes and the upheavals of a whole human generation amongst whom I have worked hard at home ; never without a conscious desire to be of service to our kinsmen beyond the seas. The greatest upheaval of all, which found us, at the conclusion of a terrible war, wavering and bewildered in the throes of a perplexing peace, has focussed attention upon the problem of imperial re-settlement. For myself, and for all who think in terms of Empire, the whole of this great subject is now touched with a new and an increasing fascination.

Let me turn for a moment to the companionship of overseas visitors to the homeland. They are wont to observe that the whole country is like a garden. Nor do they withhold their love from Scotland or Wales. They approach Ireland with sympathy. They appreciate the charm which pervades every portion of the British Isles. The vastness of the greater cities is in itself an object-lesson to the stranger, who feels that he has become a partaker, an actual shareholder, in their development. As he renews his observations day by day, he finds that it is not enough to marvel and admire. He sees that mere criticism is likely to

prove as useless as unfruitful. And yet, there is much to criticise. The astounding growth of our manufacturing and distributing communities has become a danger to the State. Overcrowding is not only the concomitant of misery. It is also the cause of a distress which must lead to degeneracy, perhaps to anarchy, if it be not brought to an end.

But our Canadian visitors are to be credited with busy brains and minds. They have discovered, if I am not mistaken, something which cannot be overlaid by the mere affection or interest, which pleasant days of travel may awaken in them. Any man of business who spends a week of careful study in London or Liverpool, in Burslem or on the Clyde, in Cumbria or in Cambria, in crowded centres or in remote agricultural districts, will find a hundred facts to impress him. There is one thing, I am certain, which will fill him with profound concern, for herein lies the cause of much of our troubles at home. It is the burden laid upon us by the Great War which began in August 1914, and more than twelve years later still shakes the civilised world by its repercussions, affecting our nation more, even now, than any other, on account of our world-wide responsibilities and commitments. These are responsi-

bilities which I, for one, have no doubt that we could not honourably avoid. I also believe that we should be unworthy of our past history if we were now to show any weakness in accepting them, whatever dangers we may encounter thereby. Until he sees for himself, our Canadian or other visitor does not consider sufficiently what our burden has been. Unless he does so, and takes the knowledge back with him, this lack of consideration affects his own political judgment, as well as his practical dealing. Especially is this the case with one problem in which he cannot fail to be concerned. I mean the great problem of the redistribution of our people.

Although compared with the weight which presses on the inhabitants of the British Isles, the burden of other nations is relatively light, this very fact has some consolation in it. Here is proof of our inherent strength. If this could be freely recognised in our outlying dominions, I should feel that a new bond was being forged. For we need the aid of others. That the parental sacrifices are a part of the bond which links with us the daughter-nations—that these gave loyal service in the prolonged struggle against a threatened tyranny—all this is freely conceded. But perhaps, during the equally strenuous days of

peace, these younger nations have not fully measured the practical extent of parental protection and devotion. There appears to be a gap, not of sentiment, which is full and complete, but of co-operation, as yet inadequate, which has to be filled.

Canadians hear of unemployment in Britain. It is not open to any great proportion of individuals to see this for themselves. There is unemployment in Canada itself. To some extent there is unemployment in every part of the world. Of Dominion and Colonial unemployment generally, I think it may be said that local, accidental, transient conditions are in the main responsible for the difficulties involved. Here, in the face of the enormous tracts of territory available for productive use, it is impossible to think that any energy can remain for long unexercised. But it is different at home. Our problem was already deeply rooted before the war. We have a population vastly too large for the country. In itself, it is not well distributed. On this population rests a burden of debt so heavy that without great efforts even our great-grandchildren cannot hope to remove it. These efforts will be made, but I should like to think that we could lessen the burden which must fall on posterity. The truth

is that we have pledged our honour, knowing that our successors will not falter in its redemption. Our forefathers did the same. It was a righteous, an inevitable policy, which overthrew the threatened domination of Napoleon. All that has followed since then has justified our hopes, and testified, before the whole world, to our faithfulness.

I think we ought to thank Providence that our will, in adverse circumstances, has often proved so strong. The fertile properties of our race are solid assets. In pursuing my theme, I shall find an opportunity of taking into account this very important matter of national increase. In passing, let me say that the diminution of man-power can never prove to be of advantage to a people ; but I must pass from this generalisation, by no means a hasty one, to the particular point at issue.

Our people are wrongly distributed. When they remember the sacrifices we have made, extending over centuries ; when they consider the financial responsibilities we have more recently assumed ; I am sure that our overseas brothers, our companions-in-arms, will look homeward now, resolute in sympathy, decided in action. Their aim must be that a definite step forward shall be taken. We must establish, develop, distribute,

and settle afresh on the grandest possible scale.

I do not forget what has been done already. There have been many policies of emigration and of its corollary, immigration. Some of these policies have succeeded. Others have failed. I refuse to take any failure as final. Each experiment has taught something in relation to the problem as a whole. I recollect the work of many pioneers in Australia or New Zealand or in many other latitudes which, but for British enterprise and solidarity, would have remained unknown. One stroke of policy, one element of practical unity and comradeship, is responsible for all the success which has been attained. For everything has rested on individual character being encouraged; on individual enterprise being given its chance. So, under wise personal direction, did great companies, as in India, or in Canada itself, create the policy and the subsequent good fortune of the earliest imperial settlements.

The same principle is necessary for their extension. The truth here enunciated has a special application to Canada. For Canada, in the long chain of Empire which runs—a girdle glittering in sun and snow—through many climes, is not the least brilliant of all the link of jewels. Our Empire is a unit. From what has been accom-

plished elsewhere, Canada has little to learn. But her duty to the Old Country is clear. She has to play a special part in the development of private enterprise. The clear-cut question of the redundant population on the one hand, of the vast open spaces on the other, awaits only the solution of perseverance and of intuitive perception. Millions of men, "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd" in a stagnancy which offers no present attraction, no future scope, await release from what has grown to be an intolerable position in a world of growth and development. But there is dawn on the horizon. As a happy omen, Britain has quite lately reasserted her belief in practical progress, as opposed to visionary, and worse still communist, theories. I think we shall see, as we proceed, that the horizon is clearer; and that those who hope for a great accession of strength to our distant populations throughout the Empire—with commensurate relief to the struggling masses at home—have based their calculations on facts as they are and equally on principles which cannot be assailed.

II

Of the forty-six millions of our population, at least six millions are people in the wrong place.

I have met reformers who have staked out a definite claim for these six millions. They demand a wholesale transportation from crowded British areas to open lands ; and, provided that we can secure for the world at large an era of peace, there are good grounds for thinking that this very thing can be done by degrees. Any plans that we may make for the realisation of this dream should be based on the expectation of such a peace, though we ought always to be prepared for the peace to be broken. But to anticipate nothing else would be to place ourselves under the domination of unworthy fears. The most devastating of wars have done nothing to retard the advance of the British Empire as a whole. Wherever her progress flags, it is the distribution of her people which is at fault. " Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the face of the earth " was the ancient command. We must read the instruction as meaning, for us : " Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the face of the Empire, which has been given you for a great purpose."

I draw this thought from a fountain of principle. " He hath not dealt so with any nation." Providence shapes our ends. I resist the mistaken philosophy, or the scientific caution, which demands, without consideration of a wider need, the

drying up of any supply of human life. No lack of virility or fecundity now affects ourselves. Of course I do not advocate excessive families. Dr. Johnson was clearly of opinion that we should propagate with understanding. But the advocacy of cowardice in relation to man-power, by which nations live, is immoderate in itself, and in some forms is equivalent to a condonation of racial decay. I do not believe that we can afford to lessen by one individual the lives that are now in being. Rather, we ought to take new steps to conserve the lives we have ; and to prolong existence by liberal provision of measures for the general health. In all these things it may be said that public opinion, of recent years, has grown more enlightened. Nevertheless, as I look round my own country and observe the signs of the times, I am conscious of the emptiness of too many existences. Opportunity should be at every man's door. It would belie much that I have already said if I did not credit the unit with some power to defend himself and to overcome obstacles ; or if I did not make a very considerable claim for the ingenuity and pertinacity not less than for the stolid patience of the British race. But opportunities are not missed solely through stupidity. There are uncontrolled factors work-

ing in society at present which compel us to treat unemployment as an exceptional but intractable feature of the situation.

According to the official registers, there has been an average of not fewer than a million and a quarter unemployed individuals in Great Britain during the last few years. These figures always convey a reproach the more forcibly, because in Europe generally the position is less vexatious, even in those countries which possess problems—such as the virtual extinction of the professional class—from which we ourselves are free. But if we are true to ourselves, it is possible that recovery will soon be at hand. And in any event we are encouraged by the influences both of our character and of our history. We must not forget our unemployed, and we must have still deeper concern for our unemployable; but the more crucial difficulty lies elsewhere, and it demands an alteration in the methods of land-settlement hitherto devised. It is not, in fact, the unemployed of the official register who constitutes the normal problem of an over-populated Britain.

For the sake of the argument, let me assume that the eventual transfer of six millions overseas is a consummation of effort to be desired and even to be expected. I think we must accept the

underlying truth that these multitudes are not only, at the moment, wrongly distributed. They are examples of activity misapplied. They are wastefully, unhappily occupied. In the mass, we see nothing but a conglomeration and congestion annually increasing. For the individual, we can see that the shoe pinches and that the shackles are irksome; but, because he bears this with patience, nothing is done to relieve him. Relief, however, can be brought to him by the concentration of effort, which is even now based on the need as it actually stands; and by instruments rendered effective by experience. Some of these instruments are financial. All require skill and practice in the user. But each one of them rests on the recognition of individuality.

I am thinking, of course, more particularly of young men as I write these lines: of those who still have the world before them. If it is true that large numbers of these are so many square pegs in round holes, I want them to get out of them before it is too late. Such counsel, it may be, was easier to follow some twenty years ago. But I will look back through that space of time.

I look back to the year 1903. In that year a young man, a printer in an office in London, Mr.

George Saunders, now of Purdue, Saskatchewan, started farming in Canada, unversed in the country's ways, unpractised in agricultural life. Twenty-one years after, Mr. Saunders could say : " We have never regretted coming to Canada. We had no capital when we came. We own a well-equipped farm and have not a debt or a mortgage against us. We have provided for our family and for old age. We have a home of which we are proud, and hope that it will remain in our family for generations." These words I have quoted for several reasons. Such testimony as this could be almost indefinitely multiplied. There is sound English character on the face of them. But if, after twenty years, such results are harder of attainment, there must be a hiatus of discouragement somewhere ; its cause requires analysis.

We know, of course, that there has been an ebb in the tide of emigration since 1914. There have been years when the flow has nearly ceased. Moreover, Canadians, after 1918, left their own country in large numbers for the United States. They sought higher wages. The causes, it is clear, were economic ; but they brought into being a repatriation problem, now, at the expiration of another short term of years, slowly

resolving itself by the gradual return of those who had gone away.

Other episodes, other fluctuations, affecting the individual who might follow the example I have given, must now be taken into account. When we realise—through the demonstrations so often given of the greatness, the variety, the opulence which Nature spreads over our outlying British domains—how attractive is the invitation offered, the wonder must be why it should so frequently be disregarded. With so many millions of acres calling out for the work which men can bring to them, the adjunct of adventurousness alone seems to be wanted. From Alfred the Great and onwards, through “the stirring days of great Elizabeth,” under Caroline sway or Victorian influence, even down to the days of the present King George, a spirit of adventure has never been lacking to our seafaring, spacious, and country-loving people. It may well be that we appreciate the amenities of crowd and mart. We have raised civic pride to the zenith. But we love the open air.

I return to Mr. Saunders, of Purdue, Saskatchewan. He came to Canada without capital. He is still in his prime. Still a young man, he can claim the success that might adorn a lifetime. He has seen great changes which have come over

the face of the world since he ventured forth into this newer sphere at the age of twenty-six. His example should be decisive to any young and adventurous Englishman who has no obvious career in England. Only one difference really exists at the present time, in contrast with the period before the war. Certainly the efforts which have been made on behalf of the indigent, the unemployed, even the unemployable, have not slackened in the least. But for the ordinary man, skilled or partially skilled, equipped rather with willingness to learn and do rather than with any formal or conventional accomplishment, it is almost a truism to point out that conditions have completely changed. No man can now move an inch forward, whatever his capacity, without the aid of capital in some form or shape. This fact brings us to a cleavage. Character and capacity have given us a lead which on the whole I believe that we shall not lose. But there are rules of normal times which abnormal experiences nullify. Heaven helps those who help themselves. But this does not alter the compulsion which rests on every man to help his own brother. And in the British Empire all are kinsmen.

It is in this spirit that individual enterprise must strain every nerve to develop the territory of the

Empire by releasing those in bondage at home for a freer life under broader skies ; not minimising in any sense its hardness or need for endurance, not encouraging soft and useless men ; but granting facilities for possession greater than have ever been granted before, and allowing every conceivable credit that character may justify. This means a new departure. Our Empire can only be developed by liberal provisions framed for those who are at present hampered or depressed ; and a certain imaginativeness, heedless of possible risks, is absolutely necessary for all who would achieve or serve. The complete achievement, a thorough redistribution of man-power, only the far future can secure ; but present service towards this ultimate result is within the reach of us all.

III

Since experts in economics are agreed that human lives, rather than commodities, constitute the real wealth of a country, it follows that the redistribution of families, on a large scale, represents the one guarantee essential to the general well-being of this far-flung Empire of ours. Waste of potential energy, as I have shown already, is a stubborn fact ; and wars, of necessity, are

wanton in their wastage. The losses of peace are certainly the more avoidable. And I cannot deal with the situation which has now arisen without showing further cause for the estimate I have formed of the chance of future progress. This I conceive to be as great, in itself, as the need to attain it is imperative. In all such matters there is invariably a principle at stake. At every turn we are met by the teaching of history, by the influence of statesmen who have gone before us, by the work of pioneers in this very field of imperial development.

All those principles by which, as a nation, we live and move, have their reflex action on the life of the individual. I have already said something about private enterprise in business. But I cannot be oblivious of the fact that there is a social side to everything that happens in a community. As we anticipate a new uprising and a new incoming which shall work towards access of population on the one hand, towards depopulation on the other, it is important to know exactly how far the benevolence of Governments will assist the movement. And here it may be moderately claimed that this benevolence is assured; and, more especially, that the Empire Settlement Act, passed in the year 1922 in London, is a gesture

of the highest importance. But none the less we do well to remember how in things which call for strong individual action, the energy of official departments can only be thought of in an auxiliary, almost a tepid sense. The main business must be done by men who can think on independent lines and work on their own initiative, taking in the process their own risks, and relying on the personal factor, especially in finance, to carry them through.

Here, then, I must recur to the ground of principle; before I proceed to some matters which will, I hope, give further point to the championship of the individual, on which so much, perhaps everything, depends. Any Empire-settlement scheme must be framed with reference to constitutional principles. These are, in themselves, the mainspring of our political strength, as well as of our power among the nations of the world. To the community, they are of the highest, most practical value. To the citizen, they are of vital concern. The British Constitution has broadened down from precedent to precedent. Consequently, as our American and Canadian guests at the recent legal Conference in London conceded, the expounders of our law are everywhere respected. By this system, the com-

munity and the individual are equally protected. If I lay stress on this, it is because the rights, both of the individual and of the community, have of late been subject to attack. It is under the constitutional ægis that progress has been gradually achieved. Canada exists under the wise provisions which have been enlarged in the direction of liberty. Unity with the mother-country, under the Crown, fosters both independence and pride. That every nerve must be strained to prevent our Constitution being placed again in jeopardy is a warning that has sometimes seemed necessary. It is not, however, requisite for legislators to propound such a lesson at the present moment ; for the people have themselves, throughout Great Britain, proclaimed it at the polls. But we must remember that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

On one point I find it necessary to add an observation. There was a time when the separation of Canada from the motherland was freely mooted. One famous English writer (he was, however, a crank as clever as notorious) who made his home in Canada actually advocated the severance. The danger seems to have passed. Nor does any immediate cause threaten any recurrence ; though I should like to see in remoter

Canada a stronger appreciation of the blood-tie with the Old Country. But this risk the improvement of communications may and probably will correct.

Conversely, it seems that our own people who might otherwise contemplate a change of scene with equanimity, are often deterred by the thought of remoteness and of isolation. But as with material transport, so with the spread of education, comes the dissemination of ideas ; and the reasons for loyalty to Britain have only to be expounded clearly to carry all before them. Underlying them, all the time, is the progressive conservatism of our proudest institutions. These have proved themselves unique in their adaptability. Education, I am informed, is steadily gaining strength in every way in Canada. Teachers of every grade cannot fail—by simple instruction in our history, by study of the principles of our law—to keep the younger generation in touch with traditions of loyalty such as those which brought Canada quite recently to our side in valiant defence of the right. We may calculate that the trials of the war-period are now nearly at an end. It behoves us all, therefore, to pay special heed to the possible wastage of peace.

Since the Empire Settlement Act was passed

there has been a curious interlude in the history of our country. Episodes, throwing much light on the divergence of principle in matters political, have brought to a head all that can be advanced in favour of more direct activity on the part of officialism. We owe it more or less to the Labour Party at home that we can imagine what a Socialist State would be like. One thing is certain. No scheme of Socialism yet formulated would consolidate, or is reconcilable with the survival of our Empire. The Government which two years ago passed to its rest at home had one conspicuous defect which aggravated its natural debility. It was, as some other Governments have been, the friend, or would-be friend, of every country but its own. With a great appearance of superiority and ethical unction it gave adherence to constitutional usage, rather by lip service (I have in my mind its extreme elements) than from rooted conviction that Britain will always rally round a Throne. It must come, therefore, with some relief to those who have always supported the wisdom of our temperate kings, to know that those who are indifferent to this form of stability no longer have even a formal right to speak for the people. One of the more enlightened Labour leaders, it is true, has borne

his testimony, on leaving office, to the capacity of King George himself as the first official of the State. But this is not enough of sensibility to leaven the whole lump. Nor does it bring to Socialism more than a crumb of wholesome seasoning.

I think I can say of those who are now my colleagues that there is not one who is not ready to work heart and soul for the Empire in which they all believe. They have, I think, a clearer view of what can be done in the way of progress than theorists or visionaries usually possess. They take the Throne as a great centralising fact. They believe that it is more important to rely on our own flesh and blood, our kindred, far or near, than to tamper with institutions which are of proven value, in some unstable hope of adapting them to systems foreign to ourselves and seldom tested elsewhere except with disastrous results.

These reflections will have special weight in Canada because a fine object-lesson in patriotism and principle has been afforded by the Prince of Wales, whose visits to his ranch in Alberta have shown exactly where, outside the British Isles, he finds himself most completely at home. The Prince's ranch preaches the gospel of the talents to the world. But there is more in it than that.

In virtue of the regal position, this constitutional asset is of highest value. Canada is proud of what the whole Empire accepts in a spirit of warm affection. If we lost ourselves in this, we should become the prey of mere sentimentalism. But the Prince himself would rightly repudiate anything of that kind. His adventures in Alberta have been straightforward attempts to encourage good things and to support the claims of honest and progressive business, while never consenting (why should he ?) to divorce them either from sport or from sporting considerations. No man is considered worth his salt who does not pay his footing among his fellows. We cannot, if we are men of the world in the right sense, expect to take any step forward unless we recommend it as a paying proposition. In relation to Canadian interests, the Prince of Wales has striven on the sanest of lines—"the utmost for the highest."

We all want to be good farmers in England. We may have to come to Australia, to Canada, to New Zealand, for instruction in matters appertaining to the oldest and most fascinating of all commercial pursuits. For agriculture has always had its trading side, and we have long memories in the Old Country. We think of life, very often, in immemorial terms of the shepherd and his

sheep. In one sense we are like the oxen of Holy Writ. We are patient of any yoke that may be put upon us. But we mean business when we follow the plough. We take an infinite amount of trouble when excellence is the object of our attainment. We think in terms of life and act accordingly. England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, have striven for generations to breed the finest stocks useful for the service of man.

With wonderful climatic advantages—for these include many alternations—our Dominions have often bettered our example. The invention of cold storage, the development of transport, have proved of the greatest use to our markets and also to our consumers. And it is opportune now that men in authority should be in a position to base their actions on anything that can tell in favour of national or colonial interests. With sympathy greatly intensified at the headquarters of Imperial Government, it may be said that the keys of industry are ready to open the gates of enterprise. These certainly give access to territories far greater than any we possess at home.

Here, then, is work for statesmanship. We must use the powers of the individual to the full, whilst recognising that the exercise of public aid is by no means negligible. But we have seen

royal and constitutional influence at work. Canada has observed, in the devoted labours of successive leaders, in men like Earl Grey, Lord Byng, the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Connaught, that a system which excludes neither sensibility nor system in practical affairs can be combined with commercial strength to the advantage of all. We are now at the parting of the ways. For we are in a time of transition. But we certainly have the power of infinite development on sound and practical lines, if only we decide to employ it by making full use both of public and private resources.

IV

All that has been accomplished in our long historical progress has been due to the cultivation of certain qualities which are recognised as British ; and their simplicity is something which enables them to be spread abroad without conscious effort on our part. It has even been said that we have acquired our Empire in a fit of abstraction. On the whole this is true,

But we are in a strong position. In common life, there is nothing more natural than our habit of judging by results ; and nothing quite so satisfactory as paying our way.

The necessity of Empire development on an increasing scale is frequently made the subject of far-reaching declarations at home. "In England," said a well-known member of the House of Commons recently, "there is hardly room to move, whilst Canada and Australia are as empty as a drum." When it is remembered that a census of Australia gives to that great island-continent less people than are contained in Greater London and its suburbs; when it is noted that, in contrast with England's seven hundred to the square mile, Canada has only two for that same area; the implicated challenge stands out as a thing that must be met and fought and overcome.

I am encouraged to think, both from observation on the spot and in consultation with those who have given their lives to imperial interests, that the mentality with which the whole problem is now being approached is totally different from that which prevailed, on both sides of the intervening oceans, before the War. We have given to the whole world an unassailable proof of what we mean by paying our way; and in anything we propose for the community or for the individual the same all-persuasive thought must be our guide. But I have shown, in dealing with our own descendants and progenitors, that time is of the essence of the

contract. Time is an elastic term. But we shall be wise if we do not stretch it too far ; she is a charming but an inexorable mistress.

And at this point in my argument I take up a pregnant utterance which comes with all the force that belongs to a skilled man of affairs. Sir Henry Hambling, addressing the Institute of Bankers, has lately testified to the soundness of our race and to our character. He prophesied a continuance of international, inter-racial success for our people. Unemployment he showed to be an evil, aggravated by an artificial creation of slackness in labour, exemplified by many restrictions which ought to be removed. Then he told his audience of financial experts that nothing of good to the State could accrue by a lessening of individual responsibility ; that, however much might be done by a Government, it could only be a palliative. His main thesis was undoubtedly right.

Some risks officialism is not entitled to run. The trusteeships created by and through our Government departments are a great network, the justification of which, in all its complications, is that thereby both the community and the individual gain protection. Risks, on the other hand, are a part of his life for every individual. He would not be a man who never took any risks.

He might as well be a vegetable. It is no doubt a venture implying some hazard on any man's part to chance everything he has, or can earn, far from the land which is the home of his childhood. But on grounds of pure convenience many thousands have taken such a risk bravely and carried it out successfully. And to contrast the open life in the Dominions with much that passes for life—but really supplies only a dull and drab existence—becomes, by the nature of the case, an appeal to the reason.

I am unwilling to believe that our young men are afraid of strenuous work; indeed I know the contrary. Hardship, to which they are inured at home, is a thing that sears their very souls with a blankness of disappointment founded upon the absence of prospect. When it comes to a struggle in new surroundings, zest grows with every change of condition. The man who merely endures the oppression of a life which is nothing but a blind-alley with no ultimate prospect, rouses himself to the full height of all his latent powers when confronted (for instance) with such danger as a prairie fire. In using this illustration, drawn as it is from experiences with which Canadians are familiar, I would add that we learn by our trials. We profit by our disasters. I do not

assume, in advocating the exchange of which I have spoken, that difficulties must not be confronted in remote countries as great as those which are left behind. *Coelum non animus mutant qui trans mare currunt*. But the reward which must be fought for has an aspect (and rather a romantic one) which the gains of the Old World do not possess. The future must be like the past in one way only. The men of the present day are still in the position of pioneers. Those writers lie who say that the age of adventure is past. Our sons to-day are already inheritors of a tradition which has even now become historic; and yet they are only at the beginning of things, so vast are the continents which ought still to be peopled with British stock.

Now whether it be unemployment, the exchange of goods, or the supply of people, development of Empire must depend, first and last, upon the increase of trade. I have been sorry to read in the newspapers from time to time conflicting prognostications, and even contradictory reports, concerning this most important factor in the life of our nation, and, indeed, of the whole world. Frequently a column of optimism appears side by side with a column of despair. In consequence, the public mind grows bewildered.

There is really no cause for bewilderment, for these manifestations of uneasiness are nearly always based on shortness of view. Just because the area over which we have spread ourselves is vast, largeness of vision and forecasts long extended both backward and forward must be applied to the labour which lies ahead. We have to build on character. We must base expectation on an assured stability. The operations of trade have fluctuated enormously in recent years. Yet we can declare that the City of London still amazingly remains the centre of the financial universe. In trade, our own dominions are amongst the best of our customers. Their natural resources are unbounded. One consideration is indissolubly interlocked with another. Differences have existed concerning preferential treatment, here or there. In the preference which our people express for goods that are British made, the assumption is a natural one. There is both a belief and a knowledge at work. And there is also a spirit alive, to give more practical power to this natural idea.

We shall never be unconcerned in the affairs or in the trade of the world at large. But figures, sentiments, facts, often point to solid things wherein the British Empire sees itself as

self-contained. Once again, these are circumstances greatly in favour of the deliberate extension of our individual and private enterprises ; and they affect the different classes of workers in an almost equal degree. The capitalist—whether an individual or a corporation—is never divorced in interest from those who look to such springs of help. I am sure we shall never devise any working scheme from which capitalisation can be excluded. But every aspirant to a share in the commercial prosperity by which we must stand or fall has a right to consider himself, by reason of his capacity and his character, not less essential to the general success than the capitalist himself can be.

If, then, I were to address the banking interest on the one hand, the beneficiary on the other, I should say to the first that, because there is a new spirit awake, he will find it of benefit to all concerned if he devises new and more generous terms for the settler. To the settler, in his turn, the clear assurance can be given that, if his heart is stirred to make the fresh departure, those who have means to help will go with him all the way.

V

Looking into the long and interesting story of emigration, I find many a page imbued with

romance no less than with reality, wherein every class, every interest, seems to receive its baptism of fire. Every step forward has been fraught with struggle; whilst to set the coping-stone on the edifice of imperial construction still requires all the ingenuity and surely all the encouragement that we can bring to bear. And for this reason it is essential to give some particular attention to what has happened in the past.

I have mentioned the interests of classes. To-day there is no class which is not directly concerned with emigration prospects and even with immigration laws. Long ago, the idea of emigration was in the main an affair of philanthropy, and there was even a period when the whole business was inextricably mixed with the administration of our penal code. At one time we looked on our colonies as convenient possessions, in one way and another, to be exploited. We even had the impertinence to conceive of them as suitable dumping ground for criminals. These tactics involved rebellions which now rank with the most decisive events of the world's history. For ourselves, such things are highly instructive. On the whole, they are not discouraging. We learned long ago to respect the rights of the younger nations. Distance is

the only bar to the fullest understanding. It must be admitted that inter-communication is in some ways merely spasmodic. But, as the years go by, distances are lessened, even annihilated. Modern invention is perpetually wrestling with problems of land and sea and air and solving them. Since the introduction of wireless, the idea of distance as a barrier has undergone a complete transformation. Concurrently with the liberalising effect of policies which enlarged the emigration-field, the imperial idea dawned upon our national consciousness long ago. This is reflected, in many ways, in the creative literature of the century that has now passed out of sight.

Eighty years ago Thomas Carlyle lamented the narrowness of our own island-atmosphere. He fulminated, in his characteristic fashion, against the folly of those who did not remove themselves forthwith from its vapidities and vapours. Others who came, like Emerson, from a long way off, showed something to our credit by taking the comprehensive attitude in relation to our expansive and receptive powers. "As they are many-headed," he said of our people, "so they are many-nationed. Their colonisation annexes archipelagos and continents, and their speech seems destined to be the universal language of

men." The prescience of the great American writer is not less worthy of acknowledgment because the speech of England was also his own ; but evidence to the same effect is continually increasing, and is not likely to be diminished.

And yet, though our expanding destiny as leaders of mankind was always visible to the consciousness of many observers, there remained for quite two-thirds of the century with which I am dealing, a reluctance to shoulder the whole of the accumulated imperial burden. There were hesitations. There were divisions of opinion. The " Little England " parties were vocal, and even now they are not altogether inarticulate. And when our people left us for remote shores, though sheltered still beneath our flag, the propensity to think of them as lost or at least estranged was on the whole stronger than any desire to recall them. But now and again voices were raised to stem this tide of indifference. Froude, Carlyle's disciple, drew a fine picture of possibilities and of achievements in his *Oceana*. Sir John Seeley united scholarly with patriotic truth in his *Expansion of England*. Rudyard Kipling's manly and patriotic muse had a message for the scholar, the traveller, the man in the street. When Joseph Chamberlain flung aside the cloak of parochialism, it was to place on

his virile shoulders the mantle of inspiration. It had been given to a teacher no less idealistic than John Ruskin to fill the mind of a Cecil Rhodes at Oxford with the duty of young men to go forth making imperialism the whole business of their lives. And so, as we consider such testimony as this in the aggregate, it would seem that we might well take heed of all the divergent testimony that exists. For it actually anticipates that greater future of the Empire to which all whose views we value look forward.

But I was speaking of classes ; and we must bring it clearly before our own perception that during the relatively long period which saw emigration flowing freely, there remained at home a large percentage of our population untouched by the outward movement. In fact, there has never been anything like a concerted or organised scheme of settlement affecting the nation as a whole. The tendency has always been to support the indigent during his efforts to rise ; and very gratifying have been the successes gathered in this great field of effort and benevolence. Coming to quite recent times, the Salvation Army, which owed its distinctive methods to the eccentric but uncompromising genius of William Booth, can claim to have settled 150,000 from Britain in

Canada within the last twenty years. As one spokesman has said: "To-day we place the immediate transplantation of thousands of boys as first in importance. To-morrow we shall stand ready to assist in the greater movement of all classes. This must take place, if the Empire is to continue to fulfil its destiny."

Here, I think, we see by gradual unfolding the development of ideas concerning emigration ; and as numbers must not be kept out of sight, I will once again remind my readers that something like six millions constitute to-day the excessive, the redundant portion of the home population. Closely connected with this axiomatic circumstance are certain facts. The outflow to our Dominions—to Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa—was at one time very large. It is now very small. It is even exiguous. The effect of a measure such as the Empire Settlement Act has been insignificant. Yet I will not call the Act a failure. Still, its operation, even on lines of money alone, has not been one tithe of what was intended. The reason for this is not partial or temporary. There has been an underlying cause ; and the explanation is to be found in another, a remoter but still an extremely important chapter of history.

We must return to the idea of classes ; of the somewhat arbitrary divisions which we find embedded in our sociology. Some of these are real, some are artificial. I must not leave consideration of the unprovided, the outcast section, without remarking that our religious organisations, great and small, have contributed much to scientific treatment of a great difficulty, one which no nation on earth has yet wholly solved. We may sum up the labours of bodies like the Church Army—or of institutions like that founded by Dr. Barnardo—by admitting the excellence of much that has been done, very often against heavy odds, and not without a measure of personal sacrifice which seldom obtrudes itself into the light of day. Other agencies, such as those engineered by men of the calibre of Bishop Lloyd of Saskatchewan, have taken the educational need in hand, persuading many teachers to leave England for work in Canada ; whilst, to look at Australia for a moment, all who know anything of the appalling conditions from which it is imperative for our youth to be rescued must feel encouraged by the results attained by the late Mr. Kingsley Fairbridge, the founder of the Child Emigration Society. He chose this way of doing the work of Cecil Rhodes as his own, which hap-

pened also to be the way of the Rhodes Scholar ; and thus it will be realised how it is quite possible for statesmanship and study, theoretic aptitude and far-sighted benevolence, to coincide in endeavour. From every angle, the same truth is presented to us. Our duty as practical men is to begin at the beginning, with the child ; to start with the most hopeless cases, even the abandoned. But as we proceed, we cannot fail to discover that other sections of the community require almost as much care and thought. Whilst it is good to know that so much has been done for the despairing, these have happily never been more than an insignificant fraction of the populace.

At another extreme are those refined and excellent individuals largely reposing in the evening of life yet, through the exigencies of the time, wondering in great anxiety what they ought to do next. They present a case which is a perplexing one at home, all the more because very often it is found to be complicated with a further drain on slender resources, due in some measure to the despised " remittance-man " abroad. Here a movement, which is not to be neglected, proceeds on a co-operative plan. Sir Roland Bourne has spoken for this scheme ; and there can be no doubt that those are wise, even late in life, who

give the idea of a colonial career their attention. But this class can hardly help taking the habits of the remittance-man with it. The quietude of Bath and Cheltenham is a byword. And yet the denizens of such places are an asset to the Old Country as they are. It is hardly to them that the Dominions can now look for any really fruitful contribution to the main problem. Their slender resources, no doubt, are attractive to the mere speculator. But the energy here available is not sufficient for the risks that must be run. These uprootings come too late. I do not dismiss what is being planned for such cases with any lack of sympathy. But the very fact of the possession of a moderate amount of capital only throws into stronger relief the preponderant section which has no capital at all. Thrift is not unknown in the British Isles. I make no suggestion of financial incapacity or folly. But a definite move, at the present time, is practically impossible for nine out of ten of our unsettled people, owing to sheer lack of immediate realisable capital.

And we must continue to think in millions. I have not set up the figure of six millions of transferable people as something to be knocked down again. It may well be that we have far to go before we restore the number to the half-

million yearly which represented the average of emigrants from Britain before the war. Nevertheless we have to think in millions still ; and at least a hundred thousand families yearly, computing them as an average of six souls for each family, is only a moderate estimate of those whom a systematic system of group-settlement can now begin to supply ; given that emergence from war-troubles which can now safely be expected and granted that financial goodwill without which nothing can be done.

Once more, we must think in millions. Millions of good money are awaiting investment. With the incentive of the development of the Empire, added to reasonable security, these millions can be applied to land-development, and thus to human development, overseas.

Millions, again, of available acres, teeming with riches, invite the application of individual energy, the true wealth of nations. And the supply of such energy has never been more abundant than it is at the present day amongst ourselves, though untoward conditions temporarily restrict us. The Empire, by wise redistribution, has power within itself to bring all this repression to an end.

VI

As I gather the threads of this survey, impressed while I am by the resources of our vast Empire, I hold an even stronger impression of the fight that lies before. It is not a fight for domination. I do not believe that the weight of power and responsibility which is our portion is too heavy for us. We have no desire to add to it. But experience compels us to assume that our tasks will become ever more exacting. There will be joy in performing them. It is not only in height of aspiration that we, as a people, have become the inheritors of ideals which our forefathers dimly apprehended. We have acquired, through diverse experience, through adventures and experiments, a greater breadth of view. We must continue to build upon this capacity for assimilation and construction, in the interests of an Empire which is continually absorbing some of the best elements of other races than our own.

I see, in the course of history, many proofs that we have risen even above the splendid classical tradition. If I have said little of the French infusion, which—next to our own—is the outstanding feature of Canadian honour and prosperity,

it is not that I fail to appreciate how much it means, or how it may occasionally perplex those who hold the reins of official power. I am satisfied that the interests of the two sections are in the end identical: that we have solved the all-important question of unity. The clouds that sometimes disturb the surface presage nothing more than a passing storm.

Here I would add that I have been alive also to the occasional superiority of other nationalities in adapting themselves to the labours and endurance necessary to wrest from Nature her bounty. The Norwegian and the Dane often make sturdier colonists than our own people. While I believe that it is nearly within our reach to solve our own great problem, I see that Canada would have nothing to lose by adopting a policy of emigration which encouraged in equal degree all European countries. To their sturdiest qualities of independence, the vast majority of our stock add patience, even stoicism. Rivalry with other nationalities only accentuates the determination of the Briton.

Edmund Burke, great in prevision, was not the only man among our predecessors who thought of Empire in terms of millions. He foresaw a gigantic growth; he expected that we should

prepare ourselves for overwhelming responsibilities by means of untiring efforts. These efforts must not be relaxed. The forest and the prairie, the mine and the ocean, are not the only spheres of energy which it is desired that our adventurers should exploit. Canada now offers many other openings. Her manufactures are full of life. There is no invention in engineering, in machinery, in building, which is not being utilised. I have myself seen, what a multitude learned at Wembley, how Canada keeps abreast of modern progress in all the departments of the world's business.

Whatever the future holds for the scattered but allied possessions which our continuous progress must secure and our common history must keep united, it is certain that we cannot gain by departing from those business principles which, for the service of all, are rooted in individuality.

If any evolution is taking place—and there must be some change, as liberty through education is passed on to increasing numbers—it will eventually take the form of easier financial terms for those who follow us. It may well be claimed that our generation has borne the burden and the heat of a very expensive day. Unreflecting criticism often declares that the Victorian element sowed in folly nothing but the seeds of strife. Other

extremists assert that, this being the very age wherein all human wisdom is concentrated, wars can be made to cease. Accordingly, those who rely on the ensuing reign of peace and goodwill may sleep in their beds without the protection either of armies or of fleets.

I think that the British Empire must be very differently inspired. We have given not a few well-meaning people free rein for their theories. The result has been, once more, the discovery that strength and determination are better than weakness. If our policy in dealing with difficult racial problems had ever been less than humane and generous, we should not possess the right, which is ours to-day, to assert controlling authority wherever mingled interests meet under our own flag. I like to think, as I see young men, or groups of cheering children, proceed from some London terminus for the new world of Canada, South Africa, or wherever the advance of settlement-policy may send them, that it is for them, as they grow up, to realise that union is force.

In contemplating these departures, which make for patriotism, I come back to a familiar standpoint. Not one migrant has been arranged for without some combination of benevolence and some respect for the law of contract. The business

side has not been neglected. And those who have taken advantage of the new spirit of activity which pervades the overseas movement are confident that these very children are the nucleus of an improving security. But there are other securities which are improving. There is much to be done to re-establish our export trade. Nevertheless, in the neck-and-neck race with the United States, British ships carry a larger share than the ships of other nations to and from America; whilst in foreign trade generally, our home-port entries show a total comparing most favourably with that of all other ships combined. Our sea-strength, then, is unimpaired. Financiers everywhere await the gradual restoration of world-trade as a certainty. And of Great Britain it can be said that the conviction of strength—that is, of security, in, on, and under the water—has never wholly failed us.

This sense of security must have its reflex on the land, and therefore on land-settlement. This is supported, again, by history and by character. As with the Hudson Bay Company, as in India, as on the Niger—as, too, with recent events in mind, I would add, even in Egypt—private enterprise, public leadership, and Government support have worked together to encourage

individual enterprise. Burns was near the truth when he said :

“ To make a happy household clime
For weans and wife,
Is the true pathos and sublime
Of human life.”

I will not emphasise the anxiety and wistfulness of the poet. Recent trials have emphasised a manly and natural yearning. It cannot be satisfied in grooves which have no outlet, where all is cramped and uncongenial. He who would escape must have security before he can move.

But one essential part of this security he will find in himself. He can offer skill and character and an adaptable mind. Those who have lived and worked for the land-settlement idea, the group-settlement concentration which has become so necessary, especially in Canada, have laid their plans with caution from this very point of view, and are confidently prepared to bring them into action. Settlers cannot provide much cash for land, improvements, equipment. Landowners cannot always sell their property on extended terms. Finance, however—the finance of private corporations—will be found equal to these requirements. Money supplies are abundant where security is good ; if the process of selection,

applied both to land, to industry, and to men, is associated with a system of appropriate advances, no possible reason exists why the past should not swiftly be wiped out and an era of prosperity set in.

Let me conclude, then, with an appeal to the individual in words which shall not be merely individualistic. I reject, but I do not resent, those criticisms which are launched against Conservatism as a faith or Imperialism as a creed. To all extremists their extremes. They are welcome to them. Strong statements clear the air. But the most masterly strokes of policy are always achieved by attainment of the golden mean. There is nothing in the Conservatism which has lately been re-asserted which is unprogressive. Our Imperialism is based on justice, on security, on enlightenment, on common sense.

Our destiny is inevitable, whether we look upon it as that which is woven on the loom of Time by a higher power, or regard it as the reflection of a mighty past, the forecast of a still mightier future. *Imperium et libertas*, the idea of dominion and freedom, reverberates to us from the ages. Burke echoed it when he said : " Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom, and a great Empire and little minds go ill together." As our

people proceed in increasing numbers, thus encouraged, thus supported—for the application of every principle postulates a commensurate practical effort on the part of those who give and those who take—those who receive the newcomers will discover that it is not only the individual, the family, or the group, that is incorporated. It is the Empire itself which stands to gain by the plans which I have sought to advocate in their real comprehensiveness, in their essential simplicity. Every life is of value, and every individual should have his chance in a world which is rich in material good and infinite in opportunities. The satisfaction of imperial needs will stretch “the bounds of freedom wider yet,” and contribute, by the extension of that freedom, to the welfare of the world.

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XIX

THE BOLSHEVIST MIND

IT is very surprising to reflect that the term "Bolshevism," with all its obscene associations and connotations, is not more than ten years old. The Russian Bolshevik party, from whose name the term is taken, is itself barely twice that age. But surprise may be modified by the reflection that, except for the name, there is little new in the psychology of Bolshevism. Before there were Bolsheviks there were revolutionaries. And the revolutionaries of earlier days presented much the same appearance and, apparently, abused much the same mental processes as the Bolsheviks of to-day.

Yet it would be idle to suppose that the triumph of the Bolsheviks in Russia has not exposed many new facets of their psychology. What before had been momentary at best (or at worst) is now an established thing. The creatures of the shadows have come into the daylight and clothed themselves with substance, just as the white things under an old stone crawl into daylight if you lift it.

The world has seen Bolshevism in the making and in its rise to power. We have seen for nine ill-omened years this system in control of what was once a civilised, a cultivated, and a prosperous country. We have not yet seen Bolshevism in complete decay ; but the prophecy is not hazardous that most of us will live to see this too. So long, however, as it holds its defiled place in the forefront of the contemporary world, the phenomena associated with it deserve pathological study. The more malignant the microbe, the more exacting the duty of the scientist.

Bolshevism is not purely a Russian manifestation. It is the common observation of everyone who has to deal in an educational capacity with young men and women that there is a stage in their psychological development, a kind of mental puberty, at which they are curiously subject to infectious ideas of an extreme virulence. As with infectious diseases of the body, not everyone is equally liable. Many, perhaps the majority, of intelligent and balanced boys and girls pass from mental childhood to adolescence without infection. But a considerable minority, whether from a nervous reaction to the fever of modern civilisation, or from some strange degenerate defect of mind or body, do in their teens become convinced

of the desirability of the overthrow of the moral and administrative foundations of society. It is rare indeed to find a genuine Bolshevik in any country who has not become one (even though by another name) before his or her twentieth year.

A deep toll is taken of the immature. One must catch fools young. Little or nothing, it seems, can be done for the unfortunates who, attacked by the disorder, are unable by a healthy natural process to expel it from their system. Nature has no cure for this form of madness, though I have known a legacy from a rich relative work wonders. The subject is both complex and interesting. Social psychologists and alienists might well join forces in its exploration. I shall not attempt here to discuss the subject fully—ten times the space at my disposal would be insufficient for its full consideration—but a few observations upon the mentality of the Russian Bolsheviks may help to open up a fruitful train of investigation.

The word "Bolshevism," strictly used, means, I understand, the policy of the "majority" group of the Russian Social Democratic Party after its split twenty years ago. The out-voted rival group—thereafter called the "Menshevists"—put forward a more moderate programme which

has since been associated with their name. The programme of the Bolsheviks envisaged the attainment of an extreme Socialism by extreme means. The Menshevists were the more influential party from the time of the split until 1917. Kerensky, a rhetorical half-wit, though nominally a member of yet another Socialist party, was in close sympathy with them, and under his short-lived régime the Menshevist leaders enjoyed a brief hour of prominence. The Bolsheviks' turn came, however, at the end of the year, and it came, and could only have come, through the sloppy and gaseous weakness of Kerensky. He talked and talked and talked at the one moment when a single battery of artillery, resolutely directed, might have saved the world.

The Bolsheviks, who at least knew their own horrible minds, seized power, emerged successful—if shaken—from the civil war, and have ever since controlled Russian policy.

The first characteristic of this engaging tyranny to which I draw attention is its immorality, its insolent defiance of every accepted moral standard. Its members were notorious in Russia before the revolution for corruption, cowardice, and treachery. The whole revolutionary movement was honeycombed with police spies ; the proportion of these

to wholehearted revolutionaries varied in the different parties, but it is said on good authority to have approached the almost incredible figure of sixty per cent. among the Bolsheviks.

This must not be taken as indicating that the Bolsheviks were especially feared by the authorities—they were in fact the least dangerous of the extreme parties—it was simply that six out of every ten Bolsheviks volunteered their service to the police, and were prepared, for the sake of a monthly pittance, to betray their colleagues. Even the leader of the Bolshevik fraction in the Duma, a man who had made himself conspicuous by the violence of his language, was exposed as receiving a salary from the police. Unmasked and driven by public opinion out of the country, he went to Lenin, the head of the Bolshevik party committee abroad, who whitewashed him and tried to reinstate him in the party councils. Lenin cared nothing for such lapses. He himself described his party in the heyday of his power, as comprising ninety-nine rogues and fools to every one genuine member. Surely Mr. Cook must be that one member and may have remembered it as he kissed, on entering, with a series of obeisances, his master's tomb. Just as Lenin endeavoured to rehabilitate a convicted renegade in his party before the War,

so he was ready during it to play the traitor to his country, and accept help and money from its enemies.

It has seemed incomprehensible to many that Lenin was able to carry his party with him in these directions, so repugnant to every kind of decency, so contrary even to the honour which is said to reign among admitted thieves. Some have thought to find the solution in picturing him as a man with an unnational but original genius for leadership and organisation. I cannot agree with this view; Lenin's failures and incompetence have been much too clearly revealed for him to take high rank even among the less successful of revolutionary leaders.

The explanation is, to my mind, to be found in a second characteristic of the Bolshevik mind: servility. Theirs is a slave mind. It is not a good Jewish mind. It is a Jewish mind drenched in a low cosmopolitan sink. No party in the world offers such unquestioning obedience to its leaders as the Bolsheviks. Any act of independent judgment, any suggestion that a man dares to think or speak for himself, brings drastic, probably mortal, punishment. Lenin was a man eaten up with the lust for power. To him every means was justified by the increase of his personal authority

in the Russian revolutionary movement. While Lenin lived, his word was law to his lawless followers. They might—six out of every ten of them before his emergence did—send a copy of his instructions to the local police, but they obeyed him. This was certainly not due to the quality of his eloquence, for since Karl Marx himself, no revolutionary has written, or spued out, words with more consistent unreadableness than Lenin. But he represented some kind of authority, and the maniacs who had cast off obedience to the established rulers of their country gladly bowed their necks to his more tyrannous yoke.

Where he piped, however dissonantly, they danced. It was an erratic course, like the footsteps of a man either very drunk or lost in a desert. At one moment he led them in the direction of an extreme Communism ; when the failure of this experiment threatened to overthrow the position of his party in the country—for even the torturers and executioners of the Cheka could not have held down for ever a population desperate with starvation—Lenin turned a full circle and ordered his slaves to accept a “ new economic policy,” which was nothing less than an attempt to return to capitalism. Hardly a voice was raised in protest.

Such criticism as came was from other Bolshevik leaders, seeking the reversion of the leader's authority.

The rank and file of the party throughout Russia—indeed throughout the world—accepted without reservation the reversal of a policy which they had for years advocated, in favour of an economic system which they had spent their lives in denouncing. It is hardly necessary to say that the English zanies galloped over one another in accepting this repudiation of Bolshevik Gospel. Not even Mr. Lansbury bleated. But not much excites him unless England seems to be doing well.

The servile "rebels" could not ignore the absurdity of their position. They took refuge, therefore, in what must be regarded as the third main characteristic of the Bolshevik mind—cynicism. In all the chronicles of political chicanery, I know nothing to rival the impertinent cynicism of the Bolsheviks. Men have lied before now for the sake of their country, party, or family. But no one has lied in and out of season over a period of years with the easy disregard of probability or consistency displayed by the Bolsheviks. To such confirmed liars one lie is, I assume, as good as another; but this is not enough; the Bolsheviks habitually proffer both lies, and add a

third, as a courteous alternative, if they find it to hand.

Let me mention a typical example. The first appearance of the Bolsheviks on the horizon of world-events was when they stood forth in the early days of the Russian Revolution as the extremest kind of pacifists. Concealing the fact that they were financially and otherwise supported by Germany, they denounced Tsarist Russia and the Allies as nations intent on annexation and spoliation. Simultaneously, however, they offered secretly, through representatives of the Allies in Russia, to join forces with the Allies against Germany. Just to round off the fraud, they addressed a pamphlet to the British troops at Archangel, denouncing the long-deposed Tsarist Government for desiring to conclude a separate peace with Germany; declaring that the Empress had secretly communicated the Allied military secrets to German Headquarters; and setting themselves forward as the true champions of Allied interests.

Their whole attitude was a triple example of filthy and cynical falsehood.

They have not changed their methods. It is impossible to shake their self-possession. As recently as a few months ago Litvinov (alias

Finkelstein, alias Wallach) sent an impudent reply to a Note in which the British Government had complained of infringements of the trade agreement in the unconcealed anti-British activities of Bolshevik representatives in all countries. To this Litvinov replied that—

“in accordance with the decision for peace of the toiling masses of the Soviet Union, which are in entire conformity with the same aspirations of the popular masses of Great Britain, the Soviet Government will in future also pursue its peace-loving policy, which excludes all aggressiveness towards other countries.”

But since even Litvinov could not hope that this sentence would go unchallenged, he was at pains in his reply to explain that the Bolshevik Government could not assume responsibility for the actions of the Bolshevik International and other similar organisations. Only one comment is possible upon this. The attempt to separate the Bolshevik International, the Bolshevik Party, the Bolshevik Government, and the half a dozen other Bolshevik organisations that have their headquarters at Moscow, is a most impudent attempt at deception. It is on a par with the book-keeping of a fraudulent bankrupt to deceive his creditors, or of a man preparing to set fire to

his warehouse in order to obtain money from an insurance company.

The personnel of the various Bolshevik bodies in Moscow consists of a small and privileged set of men. It is ridiculous to suppose that a high Bolshevik official ceases to be a high Bolshevik official when, as a member of the Bolshevik International, he sends money to the aid of the participants in a British general strike; or proffers assistance to a Chinese force whose express aims are anti-British. Equally cynical is the implication in Litvinov's note that the Bolshevik Government can accept no responsibility for the Bolshevik Press. From his indignation, his tone of hurt surprise, a complete simpleton might imagine that Russia to-day was a free country with a free Press. Litvinov, unless he is even a greater fool than I think him, must recognise that the whole world knows that Bolshevik Russia is a force-imposed tyranny; and that no newspaper can exist which does not obsequiously present the official Bolshevik view.

Why, then, it may be asked, does this man make a public display of his cynicism? The answer is, of course, that his note was conceived and intended to evade the basic demand of the British note—namely, that anti-British activities

must cease—by a smoke-screen of impudent defiance. And it was, of course, principally intended for our own local fools.

Litvinov (alias Wallach, etc.), on the absurd ground that the British Government was complaining of words rather than deeds, went out of his way to quote, as a *tu quoque*, a passage from one of my speeches in which I referred to the Soviet Government as a “gang of assassins and robbers.” This, says Litvinov, is an example of the “most immoderate abuse of the right to engage in propaganda within Great Britain against the Soviet Government” by British ministers.

Of the phrase I used, that the Bolshevik leaders are “assassins and robbers,” there is only one observation to be made: *THEY ARE!*

The men who have been openly responsible for the execution and torturing to death of hundreds of thousands of their fellow-countrymen can hardly regard the word “assassins” as mere abuse. If I knew a stronger word, I would use it. For the men who murdered in cold blood the innocent children of the Tsar, to object to the name of assassin, is only a crowning example of the cynicism which is so repelling an ingredient of the Bolshevik mind.

As for the charge of robbery, it is hard to see how the word could give offence to a government which has consistently preached the doctrine of "robbing the robbers," in other words, of plundering the wealth acquired by any man in any class of the community; and whose first act in power was to seize the banks, and to make house-to-house requisitions of all articles of value. Let it then be repeated quite plainly that the Bolsheviks are both murderers and thieves.

There is one other facet of Bolshevik cynicism which has struck me very forcibly during the last few years. Shortly after they came into power there was an attempt, almost world-wide, to advertise the alleged merits of their régime. We were told with nauseating repetition that, if there was one thing more than another that the Bolsheviks had done to improve conditions in Russia, it was in regard to the education and care of children. This lie, for such it was proved to be, flourished for several years, until at last evidence was overwhelming of the actual condition of children in Bolshevik Russia.

We then learned—from sources which could not be controverted, and which were confirmed by outspoken Bolsheviks themselves—that the con-

ditions of child-life in Russia were, and are, almost beyond description. It was not merely that the schools have vastly decreased in number ; that teachers have been driven out and killed ; that neither fuel nor writing materials nor books are available. We discover that the Bolsheviks are seeking to consolidate their power in Russia by degrading the present generation of children to acquiescence in their principles. Undegraded, they could not acquiesce. Such schools as exist are hot-beds of vice and immorality. The streets of the great cities are infested with bands of children like packs of pariah dogs—the boys thieves and the girls prostitutes. No mother can any longer hope to control or even to guide her growing children. In existing Russian conditions the child is caught at the most impressionable age and deliberately dragged down to the moral and intellectual level of the Bolsheviks themselves.

Cynicism is a word too feeble for the attitude of mind of a set of men and women who seek to secure their political ascendancy by the deliberate degradation of even one generation of children. The attempt itself exhibits the taint of insane cruelty, of perversion, of utter mental corruption. If the alienists have a pathological category in

which the Bolshevik mind, Russian or English, takes its special place, they would do well to declare it. If they have a cure, other than execution or forcible restraint—I doubt if they have—let us know it.

Meanwhile, in dealing with the Bolshevik leaders, let us remember that we are dealing with homicidal megalomaniacs, not with normal men and women. And when we are told that the remonstrances which I and other ministers have made in plain language against their activities afford some kind of justification for those activities, I reply that no one abuses them for the sake of diversion. It would not be worth while. A man cannot dine out on the strength of adverse criticism at the expense of Judas Iscariot or of the Emperor Nero.

We become only concerned to make plain the filthy vices, the blood-thirsty tyranny, and the economic failure of the Bolshevik leaders, when we realise that a febrile and hysterical minority of our population is inclined to take its orders from the decaying and bloodsodden system of Moscow.

Opposed by such a movement we claim the right—and we propose to exercise it—of examining the records of the gang of murderers and bri-

gands who are openly challenging the British Empire. They may perhaps find the attempt to destroy that Empire more difficult and more dangerous than to do to death in a Bolshevist cellar charming and innocent Russian princesses, who, being princesses, were still children.

XX

A WORD FOR ENGLAND

“**A** WORD for England” must be, first and foremost, a word in favour of the predominant partner in the greatest federation that the world has ever known. There can be no hesitancy in claiming success for this individual and collective power; and, for success itself, there can be no shame in declaring a certain partiality. “If there be one successful country in the universe for the last millennium, that country is England.” This witness is American: but such testimony might be quoted from foreign writers all the world over. The sentiment, which bears within it something more than eulogy, also carries forward hope of achievement in fields as yet unknown. For success is a plant which scatters its own seeds.

The successes of England in arms or commerce, still regarding things from the foreign standpoint and still looking at the universal interest, should have killed envy outright. So generously, in fact, have these advantages been used. But envy

has been rife in recent years. It would indeed savour of the unctuous and hypocritical if I represented England as perpetually inoffensive or quixotically scrupulous. But success does more than succeed. In this way, the proverbial proves its point; thus does the fabulous display its practical usefulness. The story of St. George, for instance, had only the other day its most victorious hour, when a friendly king, a hero and an ally, unveiled at Zeebrugge a memorial to men of our blood, honouring the emblematic but by no means enigmatic figure which faithfully represents England to the world as tramping down the forces of evil in the shape of a dragon. Alien envy receives its quietus here. Thus does the voice of England speak for our composite race to foreign ears. With that knowledge, I reject the idea of envy as a thing unlikely to be cherished by open-minded readers of universal history. But domestic envy is a different thing.

Our own islanders feel, almost to a man, that they lead the world in matters of moment. But a good many of them like to divide the honours, split the credit, deny any special place to England. These sensibilities are worthy of something more than passing notice. England herself would lose a great deal if these were cavalierly treated. A

composite race cannot ignore any of its constituent parts. And they have the fighting spirit, these lesser units, which so much resemble independent nations. Men of Scottish origin, or Welsh, seldom forget that a loyalty to their own racial sense transcends any other allegiance. It is more than local and provincial. It is national. The same thing can only be predicated of Ireland with a difference. But the Irish have become difficult. They have become, for the time being, a race apart. That the commingling strains will reassert themselves, that reactions will recur, I cannot doubt. As I consider these things, I look beyond divisions to an underlying unity, affecting the past and the present through the call of the blood : manifestly a thing not without some hope for the future. At this point I am not thinking of things political. I am thinking linguistically. And, because the resurrection of Erse as a language leaves me cold, because I cannot even warm to Cymric or Gaelic, I wish, with all my heart, that north of the Tweed or west of the Usk the lessons of the Tower of Babel had the force of the Riot Act. But this should be used for the cohesion, not the dispersal, of misguided people. The English language has a linking, not a fettering power.

Language apart, however, a refusal to acknowledge English supremacy on English soil has definitely to be accounted for. The expansion of England into every region of the known world has followed, very naturally, the adventurer whose natural element is the water. But in the history of a people the unexpected often happens. An Empire is acquired in absence of mind, and the public at large are both ignorant and inarticulate about it until a poet like Rudyard Kipling arises and asks the reason why. Then, and not till then, we all look round, wondering if justice is being done to England, if England is doing justice to herself. Soon it is seen that when all contributors to national greatness have been considered there must be an apex, there must be a centre, there must be a rallying round the pole that carries the united flag. Honour must be given to whom honour is due. This is as necessary for a country as it is for a man. And here, since I am speaking of a country, let me look at our own for a few moments from the geographical point of view.

London, for instance, like England herself, is a good deal more than a mere geographical expression. Some of our great ports may challenge even London in this point of supremacy or that; but London shows, more effectively than any other

city in the world, what financial mastery means. London is a world-centre, superficially regarded. But her internal strength makes London England's very heart. By dominating so much of the world in a commercial sense it seems only fair to England that all tributaries should consider the source of their own increase of strength. For hence, quite directly, it proceeds. And it gathers a certain momentum by the use which English character is wont to make of some doubtful advantages.

One of these is the English climate. As our character is unjustly treated when it is called perfidious, so, too, the climate we enjoy might complain when arraigned in some personification or other for the effects of its temperate variabilities. Bad weather is a nuisance, but is no great hardship to the temperament which adjusts itself accordingly. A little roughness of the elements is a very good thing. It is something to stand up to. It might seem strange that I should commend the climate which, like other Englishmen, I have often enough found fault with myself, but such abuse is positive, not comparative; and a little observation teaches that many climates are infinitely worse. King Charles the Second knew what he was talking about when he said that it was possible to fare forth abroad on a greater number

of days in the year than would be possible anywhere else ; and when another Charles, a moderate but very breezy poet, set his praises to the melody of the north-east wind, he preached an English parable, though some of its inspiration came from outside. The truth is that English manhood suits itself to all weathers and is glad to be out in the storm. I could even say a word in favour of the fogs of England, if I did not realise that a London fog is to a great extent, in its abnormal inconvenience, no natural phenomenon, but the result of lack of science in countering its more objectionable features. Yet even here the main contention is sound. English temperament is strong because of its capacity, tenacious as hope itself, to bear and to endure against any odds.

If English character and climate combine to bring out the higher qualities of manly nature, there are other conquests which confirm the priority that England, in the course of her eventful history, has gained. Manifold though these have been, no factor forces them on the cosmic consciousness so admirably, and withal so pacifically, as the triumphs of her language. All forms of envy, home-made or foreign-grown, are reduced to silence here. Were spoken speech the only instrument at work, the miracle of a tongue which

advances in its general usefulness would be worthy of special notice. The indirect influence of Greek and Latin has not waned. Of living languages, I concede a very high importance to French and Spanish. But English, directly and indirectly, spoken or written, wields as great a power in the world as all the others in combination, and does this partly by that absorptive facility which is the peculiar feature of the English racial temperament.

It is when we come to the writers of English that the greatest field of all spreads itself attractively before the mind. The internal dissentients disappear. Burns or Scott pay their homage, by no means *sub silentio*. Swift and Goldsmith echo the English claim in literature which they made a province of their own. A moment's reflection will be sufficient to establish the growing prominence which in retrospect we may see heralded by Bunyan or Shakespeare, maintained by Dryden or Milton, extended by Tennyson and Matthew Arnold, and gathering impetus through the work of many men now living, some of them recognised, some of them disregarded. English pens have proved themselves more powerful than many swords. Even if this were not so, looking at the component parts of that influence so often

disguised as Britannic, England stands first and the rest nowhere. Though the scholar may be fully justified in his laborious researches amongst the obscurer dialects of our country, he will suffer the fate of the mere pedant amongst all thinkers if he confuses the curiosities of human language with their real force. The real force of England does not, indeed, rest on this impregnable rock; for the simple reason that rest implies repose. The symbolism most fitting here has often appeared on an English penny. It is that of a lighthouse, which is continually kept burning, shedding forth a living and a perpetual ray.

If language is one exemplary criterion of greatness, there are others which will prove, if proof be required, the true predominance which Englishmen feel belongs to them at home. Continental Courts and mouthpieces are for the most part content to accept the English pre-eminence and to take it for granted that the leader represents the whole. So much for the foreign attitude. Once more, it is the home attitude that matters to us all. The criteria we are now thinking of must be examined a little more carefully, for patriotism of the finest and most essential kind is at stake whenever a country is treated unjustly ;

whenever, in peace or war, her rightful dues are withheld by friend or foe.

England is treated unjustly when her rightful place is disguised or annulled by expressions which show a tendency in meticulous writers to become almost fashionable. Where national or international interests are concerned, England should stand incontestably *primus inter pares* when representing the British *Raj*. To this primacy it would be a graceful act if all the home communities would bow, as the African or Asiatic or Trans-Oceanic bow. But is this always so? In the face of mere grudging admissions, occasionally merged into denials, the gorge of the practical Englishman rises. Justifiably so. Naturally so. The Englishman is nothing if he is not practical. Sometimes the practical ground in reasoning is the highest ground of all. And it is this very practical sense that often gives to the Englishman his passion for statistics.

Even as I pen these lines, there lies before me a most interesting pamphlet, full of facts and figures. Those who invited me some little time ago to identify myself more specially with the Royal Society of St. George could not have paid me a greater compliment, and their pleadings in favour of England's greatness, though their truth

may be taken for granted in the court of public opinion, could hardly be set forth more engagingly than a simple tabulation of names and facts affords. The existence of such a Society of St. George is in itself a proof that the patriotism which should increase our pride is occasionally dormant. The need for it testifies to a certain neglect. Yet the case for England has only to be stated to awaken the indolent, to confound the hostile. If all the world were against her, England would stand alone. As Shakespeare knew ! But England does not stand alone now. Rather, having assumed the titanic burden, having fought the battles of the weaker nations, the recognition given should be commensurate to her responsibility in leadership, numbers, government, methods, men. Let me come to figures and facts.

In the late War, England provided four times as many fighting men as the rest of the United Kingdom put together, and actually sustained 82 per cent. of all the Empire's casualties. In peace, where an average of a hundred millions sterling a year have represented her average contribution to imperial and local revenue, one-eighth of that sum is the burden borne by Scotland, one-fifteenth by Wales. Whether in peace

or in war, American tests will show that England responds splendidly to any test which seeks out intellectual superiority or such adaptability as goes to the strengthening of nations. And the elaborate examinations which are used in America for these tests provide evidence in favour of England of a very high value. Looking farther afield, at the vaster spheres of trade, I find that in the total value of imports and exports dealt with in the ports of the several kingdoms at home, England holds the honours with a percentage of no less than 87 per cent.; and I do not think it is too much to say that this fairly represents not merely the lead which England holds, as we know it, but her relative position in the eyes of the whole world.

Nevertheless it is true of England, as it is of every land that needs to build some part of the new era in life and work, that "happy are they who can hear their detractions and put them to mending." Even England could not be improved by language of indiscriminate eulogy. But I think it is true to say of our country that her strength is in some respects made perfect in weakness. It would be a commonplace admission, that alien influences in finance, in art, in character even, have been absolutely necessary

to English evolution. But the absorptive power which has helped to make this evolution possible only unifies her laws and amplifies her liberties. It can never be said of England that she has not recognised the dangers of insularity. That detraction, once hinted, has been met through active lives and written books. And the result has been, amongst her own people, a deserved pre-eminence: for other races, an admired example.

I hold it right, then, that at this eventful stage of the world's history, the pre-eminence of England should be better understood by her sons: more valued, more widely propagated through the celebration of anniversaries, in assemblies where young and old may meet together, and in other sane and festive ways. Our territory, so small in extent, but great in the unconquerable spirit of its inhabitants—one which has established continents and fathered great nations, including that exuberant Republic, the United States—offers lessons of concentration and of principle which it is the duty of us all to inculcate in the rising generation. These scions of our stock will be more widely travelled than their fathers were. But travellers will also come to us. There will be scope for the acceptance, the promulgation,

of English ideas. And for every form of culture that makes for wisdom and liberty, this garden of England will continue to find room.

Those who visit us from afar are very fond of describing all England as a garden, and Francis Bacon thought that a garden afforded the very highest of human pleasures. We may take these parallels a little farther still. The multifarious cultivation for which our land is famous ranges from the fertilisation of little fields to the making of magnificent cities. Historically, we have shown how the amazing Cromwell falls into line, in patriotism, with victorious Marlborough or epoch-making Chatham. With all these growths and inseparable from their graces, there has ever been, in English character, a love of the generous, the simple, the human. Our open-air life was once a merry one, and all we have to do for its continuance is to be true to ourselves and our traditions, for wherever these are spread in the world, there too will be echoed a good word for England.

END OF VOLUME TWO

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